SHORT STORIES

THE GREAT HOME STORY PAPER.

TARTAN COVER
No. 3.—MACLEOD.

No. 715.] Week ending September 13, 1902. [One Penny.

Digitized by Google

A KODAK for 5/-

The No. 1 . .

BROWNIE.

Gives Pictures 2½ by 2½ inches.

Despite its small size and low price the No. 1 BROWNIE is a thoroughly efficient little camera, and yields photographs as clear and distinct as possible. No dark room is needed for changing the films. In use the Brownie Kodak is simplicity itself.

THE NEW BROWNIE KODAK

The No. 2 . .

BROWNIE.

Gives Pictures 3¼ by 2½ inches.

MARVELLOUS VALUE PRICE **10/-** ONLY.

Finders for vertical and horizontal pictures. Eversot time and instantaneous shutter. New and convenient spool-holding devices. Improved non-detachable winding key. Loaded and unloaded in daylight.

Ask for the Kodak Catalogue of all Photographic Dealers or of

KODAK LTD., 43 Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.

Wholesale and Retail Branches: 96 Bold Street, Liverpool; 72-74 Buchanan Street, Glasgow. *Retail Branches*: 59 Brompton Road, London, S.W.; 60 Cheapside, London, E.C.; 115 Oxford Street, London, W.; 171-173 Regent Street, London, W.; 40 West Strand, W.C.

'LET'S TALK OF GRAVES'

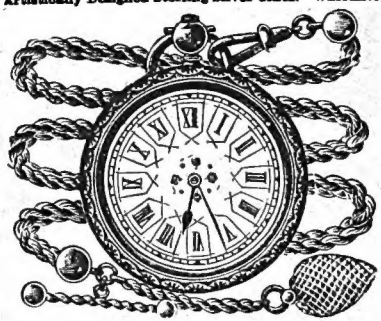
Shakespeare

SPECIAL OFFER.

Lady's Silver Watch and Albert for 30/-

TERMS. 3/- with order, and balance by monthly payments of 3s.

DESCRIPTION. Sterling Silver Watch with horizontal movement fitted with all modern improvements and Fully Jewelled; Handsomely Finished Opal Dial Decorated and Embellished in High-class Style; Artistically Designed Sterling Silver Cases. Warranted Five Years.



Very Neat Two-row Sterling Silver Albert, with Bar and Drop Piece.

Watch and . . Albert complete in Elegant Case. 30/-

Send for our No. 1 Catalogue of Watches, Clocks, Jewellery, Cutlery and Plate, Fancy Goods, etc., etc., Post Free.

Good Agents Wanted in spare time. Persons in regular employment should apply for terms and particulars.

J. G. GRAVES, 69 Division St., SHEFFIELD.

From 1s. weekly. Special Offer. £12 18s 6d. Sample for £6 6s. Carriage paid. PLATED RIMS, FREE WHEELS, RIM BRAKE FITTED FREE. Agents wanted. — DEREHAM ROAD CYCLE CO., NORWICH.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. Room 2), 125 Oxford Street, London, W.

DO YOU WANT A GOOD CYCLE?

Write for my Lists. I deal only in the **Best Coventry made Cycles**, and by contracting for thousands annually, **I BUY CHEAPLY and SELL CHEAPLY.**

Premiers, Rovers Coventry Challenge, Triumphs, Swifts, Humbers, Centaurs, Raglans, Singers, etc.

from 10/- MONTHLY

The QUALITY is there. Get my prices, save money, and ensure satisfaction.

A High-Grade COVENTRY CYCLE for £6-0-0.

Two Years' Guarantee. Easy Payments without publicity. Cycle sent on receipt of first payment.

EDWARD O'BRIEN, The World's Largest Cycle Dealer, **COVENTRY.**

NOSE

RAY'S NOSE MACHINES Cure Pug, Snub, Flat, Dumpy, Bottled, Crooked, or Prominent Noses. By H.M. Royal Letters Patent. Particulars for stamp Pamphlet, "Red Nose, Cause and Cure," 1/-, or medically approved Cure, 3/9, privately. LEES RAY (B.T), Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool. Ear Machines, &c.

GIVEN AWAY

With this Week's

HOME NOTES

(No. 452)

Paper Pattern

OF THIS

GIRL'S COAT

For Autumn Wear.

(4 to 6).

Of all Bookstalls and Newsagents.

Price ONE PENNY.

SYMONDS' RELIABLE CYCLES.

STRONG CYCLES.

Symonds' Cycles are sound, will carry persons of any weight. **Firm Frames** combine rigidity with tensility. **Prices £4 to £8.** Cash or easy payments. James Robey, the Irish Giant (7 stone), rides a Symonds' Standard. **Thousands of testimonials** from satisfied patrons. Reduce your weight by cycling! Catalogues free on application. Mention name of this paper. **Symonds' London Stores, 124-128 CITY ROAD, LONDON, E.C.**

DON'T MISS THIS.

OUR newest plan enables you to make a **Regular Income** as one of our agents, and get splendid presents earlier and quicker than by the old methods. To advertise our Bargain Catalogue, we intend giving away **£5,000 worth of Presents!** — Guaranteed **Timekeepers**, life-size **Dolls, Dress Rings,** and **Jewellery** of all kinds to every agent. Send your address to us at once (a post-card will do) and we will post you 12 articles of "Up-to-date" Jewellery to sell to your friends at **6d.** each. Sold by other firms at 1s. 6d. When sold, remit the money to us, and we will send you the presents selected, together with agency terms. You take no risk whatever, as we take back unsold goods, and give you a present for your trouble in any case.

(Dept. 59) THE HYDE PARK WATCH Co., 14 Ranelagh Road, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK,

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2½% **DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS** **2½%**

repayable on demand.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

MACKINTOSH'S

1s DELICIOUS! DELICIOUS! DELICIOUS

PUREST OF THE PURE. Sold Everywhere.

A very Large Sample Packet sent post free for eight penny stamps. J. MACKINTOSH Ltd., The Toffee Mills HALIFAX. *Wholesale dealers should stock this Toffee as it sells at sight.*

EXTRA CREAM TOFFEE

Short Stories

No. 715. ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending September 13th, 1902.

Princess Poppinjay.

The Tragic Little Story of a Village Wooing.

"JOSHUA! Whatever be the matter wi' ye?"

"Hannah!" he answered her, as he staggered, white-faced and trembling in every limb to his own arm chair in the chimney-corner. "I 'a sin a dead man—i' the watter younder!"

The old host of the "Black Jack" pointed, with shaky forefinger, out through the open doorway in the direction of the weed-covered, sluggish, ebbed stream of the disused canal.

"A dead man, Joshua! What be a dead man doin' here?"

"Thee's fulish, wife! How be I to know!"

"An' where were 'e, an' what wer' 'e like?"

Joshua Fibley continued to gaze vacantly in front of him, big beads of sweat standing thick upon his forehead, his hands the while twitching convulsively.

"'E wer' down in that flag bed, by the owd bridge—'is clothes were good, an' 'e looked as 'e wer' a gentry, but 'is face I coonna see, for 'e wer lyin' on it, an' it wer' unna the watter."

"What be ye a goin' to do about it, Joshua?"

"I dunno yet—a thing like that 'ull ruin the "Black Jack"—whatever I do——"

"Well, Hester will put it all right for us, but about this awesome thing, my man! Ye must do somethin' soon, afore folks get a hold on it."

"I must that! I'll just go down again an'—an' turn it over, an' see if I knows 'un."

"Don't go, Joshua! Don't go by theeself—wait for the sergeant as 'll be by on 'is rounds in half an hour for 'is early pint!"

"No, I tell 'ee! I'll go by myself first—now!"

He got up as he spoke, and shivering in spite of the July heat, went out into the sunshine and down the little sloping brick path towards the canal at the bottom of the garden.

There was not another house of any description for at least a mile round in any direction, the small lonely place, half farm, half public-house, seeming almost impossible of existence.

Farm labourers from the villages round, and occasional excursionists of the tripper sort (the spot being only thirty miles or so from the Metropolis) were the customers the "Black Jack" in the main depended upon, but it was a poor place, whose accommodation for both man and beast was of a kind at once the most primitive and scanty.

At the foot of the garden flowed, or rather crept, the canal the deserted, neglected aspect of which but added to its picturesqueness and charm.

With halting feet and beating heart the old man approached the spot where, but a short while before, he had seen the gruesome thing which had fastened itself upon his mind, to the exclusion of every other thought.

"Yes, there it was, just as he had first seen it. Why he should so desire to know more of this dead man, he could not satisfy himself, but there was the craving, and he could not shake himself free of it.

Not a human soul was in sight, not even a customer up at the house.

It was as much as he could do to bring himself to touch the inanimate piece of clay.

He was on the point of turning the body upon its back when he heard a shout from above.

"Joshua! Joshua!"

It was the voice of Hannah, his wife. He listened but did not answer.

"Joshua! Hester wants ye!"

Slowly again his old arms went down to turn the dead man so that he could see his face.

Down the brick path he could now hear the footsteps of some one running swiftly.

He made as though to sign back whoever it might be, though his lips, try as he would, could not frame a word, or even a whisper.

A supreme effort, and the suicide, or murdered man, lay before him, his face upturned to the sky.

A foreign and a handsome face, it was strange to him, and unfamiliar.

Nearer and nearer came the footsteps.

"Father!—where are you?" rang out a young, rich, contralto voice.

Then, before he could prevent her, she was by his side, and had seen the face of the dead.

Tall, stately, dark-eyed, and of a type absolutely un-English, she seemed on the instant to turn to stone.

She did not weep or wail, but with hands clenched in front of her, moaned out—"Istria—my Istria!"

"You know him?" asked the old man, in childish wonderment.

"Know him!" she answered wildly. "It is Istria Danielli—the father of my little Giacomo—my husband!"

Six years before, Hester Fibley, then about nineteen,

Digitized by Google

and a remarkably handsome girl, had left her home at Trenunder to enter the service of the Countess of Rochdale as confidential maid.

So clever was she and tactful, that she speedily made herself invaluable to her mistress.

There was only one thing about her which troubled the Countess — viz., Hester's undoubted air of distinction, and her refined superiority to the ordinary members of her class and station.

As a matter of fact, Hester had better taste in dress than had Lady Rochdale herself, wore her clothes more effectively and becomingly than did the modern representative of ancient Norman blue blood, and was therefore largely in the nature of a thorn in the aristocratic side of the old dowager.

Lady Rochdale was, in her way, curiously unconventional, almost eccentric; one of the most noticeable of her peculiarities being a mania for the entertaining of foreign notabilities, or, at any rate, those who passed for such. At her country place near Trenunder, and also in Grosvenor Square, she was for ever surrounding herself with the good, bad, and indifferent of Europe, from Paris to Petersburg.

It was this habit and custom of hers which ultimately led not only to Hester's domestic secession, but also to the creation of a social wonder, lasting more than the proverbial nine days.

One particular season, the special shining light of the usual somewhat motley Rochdale gathering in London was a certain Prince Istria Danielli, a connection by marriage of the great Italian house of the Borghese.

This gentleman was, for one of his nationality, more than ordinarily wealthy, the great majority of the modern Italian nobility being notoriously poorer even than the very poorest of church mice.

But it was his attractive personality quite as much as his money, which called forth the by no means shy glances of society's daughters, both fair and otherwise, though without doubt it was the Danielli ducats which operated largely in making the handsome prince the object of every manœuvring mamma's super-polite attention.

It will readily be imagined, therefore, that when, on the eve of Lady Rochdale's biggest and last function of the season, Prince Danielli suddenly and mysteriously disappeared, and when also her ladyship's confidential maid vanished in like manner, leaving behind her for her mistress' edification and enlightenment a note signed "Hester, Princess Danielli," society was shaken from its foundation to its centre.

Of course the general opinion on the defection of "His Excellency," and on the "shame-faced treachery" of Hester Fibley, was wholly condemnatory—with one exception.

That exception was Kenneth Ogilvie, Lady Rochdale's secretary and man of affairs.

A young man of poor Scottish family and descent, Kenneth Ogilvie, while being beyond question the true, refined gentleman, was liberal-minded and practical, in straightforward, healthy, commonsense fashion.

Appearances counted for little or nothing with him, and when handsome Hester came upon the scene and into his life, he thought not of her birth or parentage, but let her see unmistakably that did she please she had it in her power to make him the happiest of men.

Then entered the "fairy prince," and though other people were blind to the Italian's secret wooing of Hester, Kenneth Ogilvie, with the insight of true love, divined it—and realised his helplessness.

There was no mutual promise between him and Hester, therefore he could but be silent and watch events in her interests.

Still, when the catastrophe did come, when this "girl of the people" removed herself without a word from his reach, he felt hurt and sore, for though the love-lamp of his life would yet remain with him, the light had gone out.

To make matters worse he had to listen to all sorts of comments upon Hester and her works, his own mouth being of necessity sealed.

Thus he was left with an image impressed upon his heart and memory, that would remain with him until his dying day.

* * * *

Five years after Kenneth Ogilvie's last sight of Hester, he happened to be staying with a bachelor acquaintance in the neighbourhood of Trenunder for the week-end.

His friend, a hard-worked journalist, and literary man generally, was enthusiastic upon this especial corner of the kingdom.

"My boy!" he said after dinner, on the Saturday evening, "for lovely country, lovely air, and lovely women, there isn't another place in Great Britain that can beat hereabouts!"

"No?" said Kenneth, who, in their latter days found it difficult to get up enthusiasm upon anything; even the most remarkable. "You seem, Davidson, to know all about it."

"Know all about it! Why, of course I do, man! And, talking of lovely women, I saw one fair specimen when I was down here a fortnight ago, who, I think, would bring you out of your cave, my knight of the dismal countenance."

Even this did not rouse the other to respond in kind.

"I'll tell you what little I know of the story connected with this lady fair—it is a veritable romance."

"Romance in these days!" said Kenneth Ogilvie, with just the ghost of a smile. "Go on; but you mustn't expect me to believe it, all the same."

"Miserable sceptic! But listen! Once upon a time in this very village, or town rather of Trenunder, a certain poor couple lived with one child, a daughter. As the girl grew up, she developed personal gifts that might have been envied by ladies of the highest of high degrees, thereby incurring the jealous dislike of every other member of her sex, throughout the whole countryside.

"Nothing very romantic or unusual in *that!*" remarked Kenneth.

"By-and-by," the other proceeded, "the damsel took service with some big family, and, for all practical purposes, was seen no more by the folks of these parts. A year ago, however, a lady, with a boy infant, a nurse, and two other servants, put up for a few days at this very hotel. I won't excite your derisive faculty by mentioning the name she gave, merely saying that it was a peculiarly high-sounding foreign one."

"Foreign?" queried Kenneth, displaying slightly more interest in the narrative.

"Yes, sir! but 'foreign' of the very best hall-mark, the name, that is. Well, now comes the astonishing part of the whole tale—the romantic part of it. This lady (who, by-the-way, spoke English perfectly) one day ordered a carriage, and drove, alone, to the cottage inhabited by the old parents of the beautiful maiden I told you of. There she remained awhile, returning in the evening to her hotel."

"And the next day departed, bag and baggage, for parts unknown, I suppose?" queried Kenneth.

"Nothing of the kind, my too previous friend!—nothing of the kind! Within a week of the arrival of the fair visitor, whom many had recognised as the some time absent daughter of the aforesaid old couple, the latter removed out of Trenunder,

Digitized by Google

and, though hitherto absolutely unpossessed of means, entered into the occupancy of a small, lone public-house and farm in the valley, and about five miles on the Porterbury road. When fairly settled at the "Black Jack," the lady and her baby-boy (the servants returning to London) joined the new host and hostess of the solitary little place, staying for a week or ten days. She repeats this short visit every three or four months, and is known among folks for miles round as 'Princess Poppinjay.'"

"Has she paid this periodical visit of late?" asked Kenneth, with curious quickness.

"My boy! she's here, or rather there, now! Her being so it was that reminded me of this very pretty little drama of real life. By-the-way, I forgot to say that, according to rumour, she met, during her period of service, with some foreigner of distinction, who, falling in love with her, married her, and carried her off to his native heather. Her sudden return, alone, is certainly strange and unaccountable, while no one seems to know whether her husband is dead or alive. Of course, as she appears to have plenty of money, she it is who has put old Tibley and his wife into this little business, though it is a bit inexplicable her choosing so primitive and poor a place, seeing that she herself uses it every now and then as a sort of secret rest and refuge."

"And she is there now, you say?"

"Yes."

"Can you direct me to this "Black Jack" inn?"

"Oh—oh! Why, I'll show you the way to it myself to-morrow."

"Thanks! But, if you don't mind, Davidson, I'd sooner go alone."

"Oh, very well! Only, mind, I shall expect a full, true, and particular account of everything!"

"That depends. I make no promise."

* * * * *

Except to travellers, the "Black Jack" was shut for business purposes until midday, not a single sign of life being visible about it, as Kenneth Ogilvie strolled up to the open gate of the neglected-looking little farm-yard.

He began to think that his errand would be in vain; that a hope, new-born during the past twelve hours, was to fade and fail, as every other hope had faded and failed.

It was while he was thus balancing probabilities in his mind, that he saw, through the green tracery of the hollyocks and the dahlias, in the garden at the side of the house, the gleaming in the sun of a white dress.

Not stopping to think, he moved across the yard, mounted the few rickety brick steps which led up to the garden level, and in a moment was face to face with the one woman in all the world for him.

"Mr. Ogilvie!"

"Yes, Hester! I, indeed!"

"But—but how did you find me? What do you require of me?"

"As to how I found you, chance did much, and opportunity the rest. All that I require of you is to know if you are well and happy."

"It is kind of you! You were always kind."

"Was I? I don't remember! But, tell me—can I be of any service to you? I feel, somehow, that something is troubling you!"

"Mr. Ogilvie—but come along this path towards the canal; I would rather that my father or mother did not see or hear me talking to you."

"Surely not as an old friend!"

"They know nothing of old friends! They only know that I married a rich and titled man, and that less than twelve months after my wedding day, my husband, in some mysterious way, was spirited away from me, his brother, who always hated him, assuming the title and property, with the exception of that portion of the latter settled upon me by my husband, Prince Istria Danielli."

She spoke the name with a proud insistence which well became her, and Kenneth thought he had never seen her look so beautiful as she did at that moment.

"Yes," she went on, looking away from him, "there *is* something! I have a trouble! and, perhaps—who knows?—you may be come to help me."

"Believe that, Hester! I cannot call you else. Yes, believe that! Now, tell me, and what man may do to help you, that will I, for—for the old-time memories' sake!"

She could not but rightly interpret his meaning, the ring of his voice betraying him in spite of himself.

Then she told him,

Married to the Prince at a registry-office on the very morning of Lady Rochdale's reception, she left with him for Paris on the following evening. Staying in the French capital only long enough to have the religious ceremony performed at the Italian Embassy, she and her husband (whom she described as an honourable, true, and good man) travelled on without delay to the latter's estate on the Venetian frontier. Here, in the Palazzo Danielli, they lived happily for a little more than ten months; until, indeed, just after the birth of her boy.

Then, one day, Istria, her husband, started for Florence to meet his brother, and never returned. In a week Marco Danielli turned up, accompanied by a notary and the local syndic, and said that his brother Istria must have perished in some manner by the way. No one remembered to have seen him at the Venice railway station so that he must have disappeared with his horse before arriving at the City of Waters.

Given to understand that she must give immediate possession to the claimant brother, Hester, through another and friendly notary, secured her own interests, which, owing to her husband's generosity, were on a most liberal basis.

Although her husband fully had her affection, she would have been content at this point to leave with her child for England, but for one thing. Marco Danielli had possessed himself of certain papers which would be necessary in the future to establish her son's rights to the Danielli title and estates. These Marco refused to surrender, or rather denied all knowledge of their existence.

Wearied at last with her futile quest, she decided to go to England, and to wait events.

Now, through the friendly notary, with whom she was in constant communication, she had word that Marco Danielli was endeavouring to dispose of certain priceless jewels, pictures, and other property, and that unless action of some sort were taken to prevent him, the most valuable part of the family belongings would assuredly be lost for ever.

In the end, it was hastily arranged that Kenneth Ogilvie, as Princess Istria Danielli's representative, should proceed to Italy, and do his best with Notary Maffei's help, to circumvent Marco's fraudulent intentions.

It was also agreed that Kenneth and Hester should meet in the morning by the old bridge on the canal to discuss final matters.

"Good-bye!" she said, "don't go back through the house yard; keep straight along the canal side, and it will bring you out close by the "George."

"Good-bye, Hester!" he answered, waving his hand to her as he passed under the bridge, and so out of sight.

* * * * *

The next morning, before Kenneth had even thought about starting for his rendezvous with Hester, he was told that the local sergeant of police wanted to see him.

Digitized by Google

"Beg pardin, sir, tor disturbin' you, but Mrs. Filbey's daughter, up at the "Black Jack," her as is known hereabouts as 'Princess Poppinjay,' wants to see you particular."

"Why, of course, what is it?"

Kenneth marvelled much at receiving a reminder of his appointment by such a messenger.

"Well, sir!—there's murder or something very much like it."

"Murder—what do you mean?"

"Well, it *may* be suicide, but I has my doubts."

"Murder!—suicide! What is it, man?"

"There's a body bin found in the canal, by the old bridge, sir, an' it turns out to be the Princess' husband, sir!"

"Prince Istria Danielli? Why, she thought him dead years ago!"

"Perhaps, sir, you'd best go down an' see her, she's mighty upset! I've got to go into Porterbury for the county superintendent."

In less than half-an-hour Kenneth was in one of the rooms of the "Black Jack."

Hester's one cry to him was "He came to find me! He came to find me!"

To soothe her he promised to proceed on his journey at once, in order that he might try and get at the bottom of the mystery.

Before doing this, however, he insisted that she should leave the place, return to London with her boy, and await there the result of his efforts and inquiries.

He did not attempt to conventionally comfort her, feeling that, whatever the virtues of the dead man, he himself would act the hypocrite in being otherwise than relieved at her being once more a free woman.

Her last words to him were "I cannot understand it—make it clear for me, and I will be grateful—very grateful!"

By daybreak next morning he was at Calais on the road to Trieste and the Palazzo Danielli.

* * * * *

The evening shadows were gathering fast as Kenneth Ogilvie sat, taking a hasty meal, in Florian's, on the Piazza of St. Mark's, Venice.

He had arrived at the Palazzo Danielli the afternoon of the day previous, to be informed by Notary Maffei that Marco Danielli was at that moment in Venice, and, having effected his object, was preparing to leave in forty-eight hours for Trieste, *en route*, it was believed, for South America.

Kenneth went back again, therefore, to the queen city of the Adriatic, the honest little notary engaging to follow on in the course of a few hours.

Little imagined Kenneth that that night would connect him, and one very dear to him, with one of the greatest calamities the artistic world has ever sustained.

Then, Giovanni Maffei bustled into Florian's, joined Kenneth at his table, and poured out a budget of red hot news.

"No wonder the poor fellow disappeared for all these years! The villain Marco had him seized, the day of his visit to Florence, just outside his own grounds and conveyed to a private asylum for the insane.

"It was not until one of the asylum attendants was persuaded by Prince Istria to believe in his sanity and to help him to escape—an event which took place only a fortnight ago—that it was possible for him to attempt to right the wrong.

"Unfortunately, however, he did not come to me first, but procuring funds from an old friend whom he swore to secrecy, made at once for England in search of his wife.

"As you have told me, and as there can be no doubt, he missed his way in the dark, and was drowned without chance of help. How he found out his wife's whereabouts we shall never know, beyond the fact that he knew she originally came from Trenunder."

"Now, Signor Maffei," said Kenneth, "we have only to deal with this Marco—if we can. He has these papers, there is no doubt, and I fancy that if you call upon Italian law to check him, we shall yet be able to bring him to book."

"*Si, signor, si!* But look, there he is—there, quick, our hats. You pay the bill! I will after him—and you follow—to the left by the Campanile!"

Kenneth caught the little notary up before he had gone half the side of the piazza.

"There he is—see! Ah, he disappears!"

What followed is matter now of history.

There was a mighty rending sound, a roar like that of an explosion, and the great Campanile, the glory of Venice, four hundred and more feet high, suddenly fell upon its own base, almost like a pack of cards.

People shrieked, great clouds of dust rose up to obscure St. Mark's and the Doge's Palace.

It was hopeless in the face of this national calamity to expect success in their quest; the notary and Kenneth, therefore, after hearing that no one presumably was killed, went back to Florian's.

A couple of hours later, however, it was rumoured that a man's body had been found under a portion of the ruined tower. Out of curiosity Kenneth and his companion went to see, and the lawyer's first glance was enough.

"It is Marco Danielli!" said he, and (to the officials present) "I, as the legal representative of the Princess Istria Danielli, claim that everything found on the person of this man may be impounded by the State until I have proved my case on my client's behalf."

A month or so afterwards Kenneth Ogilvie, personally handed to Hester, in London, the packet of papers attesting her son's heirship and titular rights.

With regard to Hester's gratitude and the nature of it, one thing only can be said—she has promised to talk it over with him twelve months hence, and he is perfectly satisfied, for he feels that she will keep her word.

Ralph Enderby.

Digitized by Google

A Horrid Little Flirt.

A DAINTY TALE OF A LOVE DUEL.

"Yes, it's quite true, Jack—girl—and as charming in feature. I can't describe her beyond description! But she's flirt! If I were you I wouldn't place! You take my tip, old she's a lovely manner as in to you—she's a horrid little go near the man."

Jack looked at his companion, a tall, slim, young man, with jet black hair, and a handsome moustache of the same colour, then he cast a glance in the mirror opposite, and beheld himself; his companion was much the handsomer man of the two, for Jack barely reached the middle height, he had light hair and a very poor apology for a moustache, and, worst of all, it was straw-coloured! Then his eyes were bluey-grey, and looked quite ordinary compared with his friend's fine dark orbs.

"Miss Harley surely couldn't have resisted your charms?" he said, smiling.

"I tell you she has broken the hearts of a dozen fellows already—and mine among them," said the other, trying to look melancholy.

"Well, I shall go and still hope to return heart-free in spite of this syren's charms," laughed Jack.

But his companion shook his head at him sadly as he left the room.

Mabel Harley was indeed all that Jack's friend had said of her; her beautifully-moulded figure, her trustful brown eyes, and her wavy golden hair, all combined to give her that peculiarly attractive appearance that had led to the fascination and subsequent downfall of so many would-be lovers. But if we were to endeavour to adequately describe the charms and graces of this naughty little flirt—we should require a volume setting aside for the purpose, so following the example of Jack's friend, we wisely forbear with the remark that "she was beyond description!"

"Who is that blonde young man opposite, who keeps looking this way?" Mabel asked of the lady who sat next her, feeling in her wicked little heart that she had already made another conquest.

"Oh, that's Jack Ordry, studying, I believe, for the Bar. He is over for a visit at his uncle's," replied the lady addressed.

"By Jove!" muttered Jack under his breath. "The fellow didn't exaggerate in the least—she's simply charming! Jack Ordry, take care!"

After dinner Jack received a formal introduction to Miss Harley. He invited her to dance, and Mabel complied with a smile which was the more dangerous on account of its seeming innocence. Ah! that smile had done more damage to the hearts of her victims than the blackest frown in existence!

After the dance the two strolled away together, and took a seat almost hidden from view by the spreading leaves of a palm.

"It's all up with him!" whispered one of the guests significantly. "It's a pity, too, he's such a nice young man, and so straightforward himself. He'll believe every word she says."

"Are you fond of society, Mr. ——?" Mabel queried, fixing her lovely eyes on him.

"Call me Jack, if you please, it is easier to remember, and sounds so much nicer from your lips," Jack responded with one of his most slavish looks.

Mabel smiled winningly; so she had made another conquest already. She wished that fellows wouldn't lose their hearts quite so readily—it spoilt the fun.

"With regard to society, I think it depends to a great extent upon the people one meets there. Sometimes I feel awfully bored, but I am enjoying myself to-night immensely."

He cast at her another loving glance as he spoke.

"Oh, for shame, Jack!" she cried, slapping him playfully on the back. "And now"—she continued with pretended gravity—"I am going to concede a point and allow you to call me Mabel."

His answer was a surprise to her. "How delightful! Especially as there will be no danger!"

"Danger of what?" she responded quickly.

"Of us falling in love—or any of that sort of nonsense. We shall be just like brother and sister together."

Then her conquest was not so complete after all, and Mabel answered in momentarily pique—"There certainly will be no danger as far as I am concerned!"

Jack answered with wonderful frankness: "Nor as far as I am concerned either. I think thirty is quite young enough for that sort of thing, and how pleasant it will be to be able to talk naturally to each other without the constant fear of being misunderstood."

"What a horrid fellow!" Mabel cried, stamping her foot passionately on the carpeted floor of her own room. "The very idea of talking to me like that! But I'll punish him—I'll make him fall head over ears in love with me, and then just tell him what I think of him!"

"So the duel has begun," Jack soliloquised. "Lucky I was forewarned! I wonder who has had the best of it. I've got it bad myself anyway. I must wait a day or two to recover before I make a fresh attack!"

So Jack waited two days before he paid the Harleys a visit. Mrs. Harley compelled him to take afternoon tea with them, and Jack confined his attention almost entirely to the old couple; they were simply delighted with him, while Mabel thought his inattention to herself was positively rude.

However, Mabel schemed to get a few moments alone with Jack in the garden after tea, and then she commenced her pre-formed plan of revenge with her utmost ability. She talked glibly on various subjects, and again and again her eyes shot coy glances, and her lips formed into the most bewitching little smiles and pouts at his answers; now she would stoop suddenly but with matchless grace to cull a flower, then she would stand erect in front of him playfully barring the way; finally she insisted upon fixing a flower in his button-hole, allowing her hands to linger for a moment near his neck, which has a very tragic effect upon a young man if he is at all susceptible. For a time she thought she

Digitized by Google

was succeeding pretty well in her wicked plot, and at last felt emboldened to put the question :

"What sort of girls do you admire most, Jack ?"

Oh, how he longed to throw his arms round her waist and cry passionately : "You—you are the sort of girl I most admire and love !" But he managed to control himself, and answered quite calmly : "I am afraid that I am no connoisseur on the subject. As a rule, girls all look very much the same to me."

"But have you never been in love, Jack ?" she asked.

Jack treated this as some huge joke. "Good gracious, no !" he laughed. "As I said before, I think it is plenty of time to be in love when one gets to be thirty."

If Mabel felt mortified at his answers she covered her confusion ably enough, and her laughter never sounded merrier nor more unaffected, than as she led the way back to her parents.

"A very successful evening," Jack commented, as he threw himself down on the bed.

"Positively detestable !" cried Mabel, "I hate him !—and I know he does care for me—he couldn't help it !"

Jack's visits were frequent after this, he said there was nothing he liked better than a conversation with Mr. Harley, and one of Mrs. Harley's cups of tea—Mrs. Harley could make tea ! This he intimated to one who always repeated everything—a very useful vehicle if one knows how to manage it.

Mabel's conduct towards Jack changed and she became more "stand offish." Under these new tactics she felt sure she should draw him on. Jack, however, was not to be drawn on, he was always very polite, and beyond that seemed to take no further interest in her whatever.

"I have it !" she cried, after having lain awake for two whole hours plotting, "I'll make him jealous !" Then she rolled over and went to sleep in less than five minutes.

Now there was in the neighbourhood a certain Colonel who showed undisguised admiration for Mabel ; a few weeks ago Mabel would have liked nothing better than a little flirtation with the Colonel, but now her whole desire was to make Jack fall in love, and she realised little gratification from this new escapade.

However, she went walks with the Colonel and generally contrived to drop across Jack ; that young gentleman, however, contrary to expectations, showed the utmost unconcern, he raised his hat and positively smiled when he first met them —to Mabel's great disgust.

But having considered it out in her wise little head, Mabel concluded that Jack knew her reputation for flirting so well that he considered this as nothing more than one of the others —she was positively certain this must be the case—"Or else," she asked herself, "how could he help being jealous ?"

A week later the neighbourhood were surprised by the announcement that Miss Harley and the Colonel were engaged to be married. "Now we shall see !" Mabel said to herself triumphantly.

The next day Jack dropped in for tea, Mabel met him with a smiling countenance.

"I suppose you have heard the news ?"

"Yes," he replied cheerfully, "and have taken this early opportunity of calling to congratulate you." He spoke so calmly, could it be possible that he didn't care, after all ?

"The Colonel is a splendid fellow ! So handsome ! Everybody is fond of him !—and though you perhaps could have done better—well, it's best to choose the one that we really love."

Then Jack took his seat at the table, and talked away to the older couple, but the worst of it was he seemed unable to speak to Mabel without bringing the Colonel's name in every time ; he seemed a good deal more pleased about the arrangement than Mabel herself. Why couldn't he let the subject drop !

"And when is the marriage to take place, Mabel ?"

"I don't know !" She answered so shortly that both Mr. and Mrs. Harley turned to look at her.

Only Jack didn't notice, and went on innocently :

"Anyway, you'll invite me to the wedding—I shall be back in town by then, I expect, but you must write and let me know."

Jack seemed to think it must be a pleasure to Mabel to keep on harping upon this one subject. At last she could bear it no longer, but rose abruptly and left the room.

Jack returned home moody and dissatisfied, he was not at all sure of his ground, but he consoled himself by the thought that if he had betrayed his love, she would have only treated him the same as the rest of them—better that she should never know.

The engagement with the Colonel only lasted a fortnight, then the report was circulated over the town that the match was broken off. That afternoon Jack made another call.

"And how's the Colonel ?" he queried.

They were standing alone in the garden together.

"I don't know," she replied sullenly. "Haven't you heard that the engagement has been broken off ?"

"I am extremely sorry," cried Jack. "Could I do anything to explain this misunderstanding—for I am sure it is only a misunderstanding ?"

"No ; it is quite irrevocable—I find that I do not care for him—I love another."

There was a look in her eyes that conquered Jack all in a moment. He knew that he was a fool. He had been forewarned what would happen—he went into the snare with his eyes open—simply because he couldn't help it.

"Mabel," he gasped, "dare I hope that I am the one ?"

She looked at him unmoved, that fickle smile still upon her lips. "But you know you do not intend to be married until you are at least thirty ?" she said wickedly.

"Mabel," he cried passionately, "I have loved you all along !" And he was pouring into her ear the tale of burning love.

So she had conquered, at last her revenge was consummated !

Perhaps Jack saw something of triumph in her eyes, for he broke off in the midst of his appeal and cried fiercely :

"I know that I am a fool to let you know !—I was told that you had no heart—you cannot love nor know what love is ! Well, you have heard my tale and added another conquest to your list ! And now farewell for ever !" He turned abruptly and left her standing there.

"Jack ! Jack ! Come back to me—I do love you !"

And Jack turned to see her little hands stretched out towards him, while her wonderful beauty was enhanced ten-fold by the soft light of love that shone from her eyes.

"Ah !" she sighed, her lovely head resting on his shoulder, and her arms incircling his neck, "I did not know what it was to be in love then—had I known I would never have led others on !"

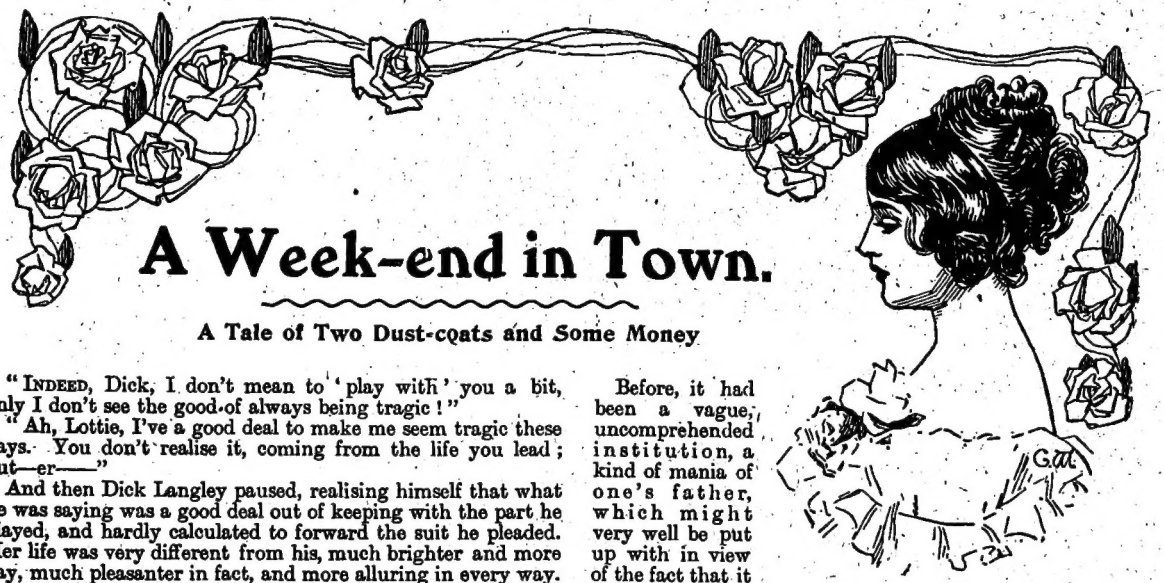
Then she put her arm through his and they walked back very slowly towards the house.

W. H. Martin.

"A FOE IN THE FAMILY"

is the title of the splendid new serial story which is to commence in "SHORT STORIES" in a few weeks' time.

Digitized by Google



A Week-end in Town.

A Tale of Two Dust-coats and Some Money

"Indeed, Dick, I don't mean to 'play with' you a bit, only I don't see the good of always being tragic!"

"Ah, Lottie, I've a good deal to make me seem tragic these days. You don't realise it, coming from the life you lead; but—er——"

And then Dick Langley paused, realising himself that what he was saying was a good deal out of keeping with the part he played, and hardly calculated to forward the suit he pleaded. Her life was very different from his, much brighter and more gay, much pleasanter in fact, and more alluring in every way. But was this the time to point out the differences? Was it wise for him, who sought to induce her to link herself to him and his life for ever, to insist now upon these sufficiently obvious differences, the change for her that marriage with him would involve?

He sighed, and his eyes straying down from the dainty chiffon about her neck, along the exquisite material of her summer gown, to where two glistening points of grass-green leather, soft as satin, showed where her little feet nestled half under the seat—his eyes taking in these things told him that her costume of to-day represented at least a month of his poor salary.

The unshadowed gaiety of her bright face might have been smiled upon as pure beauty by most men. To poor Dick, in his present mood, it meant several thousands of sovereigns per annum in maintenance. Poverty would bring shadows there, he thought; the absence of the thousand and one luxuries which each day brought her would soon overcloud that face and overcome the sunshine of it.

"You are right, dearest," said he, with another half-suppressed sigh. "And I am all wrong. I won't be 'tragic' any more. It was sweet of you to come this afternoon, and throw over that garden-party; and I'm an ungrateful wretch to repay you with boredom."

Lottie Crane beamed upon her rather melancholy lover. He was really a "dear" she told herself, for the thousandth time at least; and it was a horrid shame that his father should have been ruined, and died, and left his wife and son and daughter so poor, and—and the rest of the unhappy story. It would have been so much nicer if things could have gone on in the old happy, careless fashion, as they went when she had first met Dick, two years ago, at the Langley's luxurious place near Maidenhead. What lovely summer days on the river those had been! And how jolly Dick had been, choosing her from among the other nice girls in all their excursions and amusements! Business was a horrible thing, thought Lottie. Even her wealthy old uncle and guardian, the great diamond merchant, was sometimes upset, and made grumpy, by this same business.

"I wish people could get on without business and money, and those things," said she, prettily, to Dick. "It would be so much jollier if the government, or—somebody, could supply all the really nice people with everything they wanted, and let the horrid people do all the business!"

"Ye-es," Dick was understood to agree with dainty Lottie in this revolutionary sentiment. Business meant distasteful routine and a hundred and twenty pounds a year to Dick—now.

Before, it had been a vague, uncomprehended institution, a kind of mania of one's father, which might very well be put up with in view of the fact that it provided the means of settling one's bills, buying new boats, horses and what not, and, in short, of keeping one well ahead of one's fellows in the jolly, flirtatious sport called life. But now—well, everything was different now.

Dick's father, one of the most daring speculators of his day, had died, an almost penniless bankrupt, two years before this summer afternoon. The world in which Dick had industriously played up till the age of twenty-five knew him no more; Maidenhead was a distant Paradise, remote indeed from the terraced street in Brixton, to which Dick wended his weary way from Cannon Street each evening. His poor mother had grown undeniably fractious of late, in the dusty, fusty little Brixton "front parlour," and Madge, his pretty sister, the best sculler and punter of her sex at Maidenhead, was drooping, these June afternoons, like a flower whose roots lacked nourishment. Poor Madge held that morning and afternoon "governessing" was worse than "anything in the City."

But it was not quite true that the world of his youth knew him no more. Two links between it and Dick remained yet unsevered. One of them, in the charming person of Lottie Crane, sat beside him at this moment, upon a green-painted seat in the Park, close to which she had been in the habit of meeting Dick on Saturday afternoons for quite a long while. The other was an old college chum, Henry Marley, who dined with Dick every Saturday evening in a famous restaurant near Piccadilly, and played billiards with him afterwards in a hall below the dining-room. This link had come very near to snapping, apparently, by reason of Dick's insisting upon taking his share in the small expense involved in these weekly evenings out. But Marley's good-nature had triumphed at last, and Dick's pride was smoothed by his being allowed to pay for the billiards, whilst his friend's play was rather spoilt by the necessity of allowing Dick to win in the last game, and so lose nothing by the evening's amusement.

The first link, personified in pretty Lottie Crane, was of gossamer; the other, of the steel by which friends are bound one to another. Yet there was no sort of doubt but that the first tie, fragile though it might be, was yet by far the more precious to Dick Langley.

Fascination is still stronger than affection, and the love of a man for a maid, a passion that still will thrill him more deeply than can any relation with those of his own sex. But it is surprising upon what slight and fragile foundations the blind god will erect his fairy palaces—and, alas! how apt the structures are to topple over at first breath of an unkind wind, or even to disappear in a single night, as the result of, let us say magic, or the work of evil sprites.

Digitized by Google

In the case of Dick Langley and Lottie Crane the foundations were singularly slight. Just two months prior to the disastrous collapse in the midst of which Dick's father had died by his own hand, in his Moorgate Street office, Lottie had arrived at the Langley's beautiful river-side home with a school-friend of Dick's sister. That had been her introduction to the Langley household. It was known that she was an orphan, and that her uncle and guardian, with whom she lived, was a wealthy man and an eccentric, with a fine house and estate in Surrey, which he seldom saw, and a large flat in London. His charming ward had every possible liberty, and was encouraged to visit and amuse herself with girl friends, and particularly, under the wing of the mother of one of these friends, Mrs. Lane Thompson. The Langleys had never met Lottie's uncle; indeed it was understood that the old gentleman did not meet people at all in the pleasure-loving world in which the Langleys lived and had all their interests.

"I had no end of trouble with dear old uncle before he would let me come up to the flat for this week-end, Dick," Lottie had explained on the present sunny afternoon of her meeting with Dick. "And, you know, it really was difficult getting up from Deepdene by myself on Saturdays; such a long way, and—people wondered, and——"

"Yes, yes; I can guess; and it was sweet of you to have come so regularly, darling," said Dick. "And now, don't you think you will let me come and see your uncle, and ask him—and tell him——"

"Dear Dick, it would be simply ruinous," exclaimed Lottie, with a pretty grimace of horror. "If you had heard him at Christmas—you remember, when I said I wanted you to come to Deepdene, and I wouldn't—when he was so horrid about Mr. Spargrave!" (Spargrave was the son of a wealthy stockbroker, whose country house stood within a mile of Deepdene. Lottie's guardian had informed her that here was the husband intended by Providence for her) "If you had heard him then, Dick, you would realise how impossible it is, as—as things are, you know. He said the most outragous things; and when I ventured to say something about—well, about people marrying for love, you know, he quite flew into a passion, and growled out that in my case it would be marrying for the work-house, and—horrid things like that. And—Dick, dear, I'm sorry, but that's five striking. Do you know, I must go back now. Uncle always comes home about five on Saturdays, he says, and he expects me to have a cup of tea with him."

They rose, and walked slowly toward Princes Gate, Dick's eyes upon the gravel at their feet, his soul in the depths. Lottie insisted upon their parting at the gate of the Park, and would not hear his protests.

"Well, say you will come next Saturday, darling—somehow," said Dick, who was feeling particularly wretched, and, as he would have said "out of the running," this beautiful June week-end. "I must think about things. I won't let you go, my sweet—not for all the uncles in the world. Something must be done. I'll find a way, somehow. But mean time, say you will come next Saturday."

"Yes, I will come, Dick. Good-bye—Dicky!"

"Good-bye—my heart. Oh, darling, think of Dick sometimes in—in the middle of things!"

And with this somewhat incoherent appeal on his lips, and a great deal of very loving sadness in his heart, the junior clerk, who but two years before had been the open-handed, free-living young man of fashion, turned, and walked slowly back through the Park towards Piccadilly. There were still two hours to be lived through before he would meet Marley at the Regency Restaurant. Lottie would spend a portion of those two hours in the hands of her maid, thought Dick; for the girl had told him that she was going to a smart dinner-party and a dance that evening with Mrs. Lane Thompson.

"H'm! I'll go down Regent Street," thought Dick; "and see if I can't pick up some pretty little thing for Madge to wear to-morrow. Poor child, *she* doesn't get many fal-lals, these days. Alas!"

So the two hours were spent not altogether unpleasantly in the kindly laying out of a very few shillings on behalf of Madge and Mrs. Langley in Brixton; and Dick was feeling upon rather better terms with himself and the world when he passed the resplendent porter at the great swing doors of the Regency, to meet his friend. But, whatever his state of mind, it was a fact that Fate appeared to cherish no very amiable intentions in the matter of Dick's affairs at this particular week's end. From seven o'clock, their customary hour for meeting, until ten minutes to eight, Dick sat at the little table which Marley and himself invariably used on these occasions, and still no Marley came.

"Hang it!" reflected Dick, moodily. "He might have sent a wire or something. But, to be sure, there was no place for him to send it to. Ah, well, I suppose the only thing will be to have a chop, or something—the cheapest thing on the menu, begad!—and go home."

Already an attentive waiter had turned away two applicants for the seat opposite Dick, saying, with a look of understanding in Dick's direction, that the place was engaged. Now, as an elderly, shrivelled-looking gentleman approached the table, Dick whispered to the waiter:

"Let him have it. I'm afraid my friend cannot be coming this evening. And you might bring me a chop, will you? I—I've no appetite to-night."

And that was odd, if true, for it was Dick's custom nowadays to go without even his usual eightpenny lunch on Saturdays, in anticipation of the very pleasant and satisfying meal which Marley made a point of ordering in the evening.

So the parchment-faced old gentleman, with the broad, black ribbon hanging from his *pince-nez*, was politely ushered to the seat opposite Dick, and there settled himself, after a funny little ceremonious bow to his *vis-à-vis*.

It may have been this little old-fashioned courtesy, or it may have been interest in the elderly gentleman's rather singular order, given in a business-like manner directly he sat down:

"A small sole, a cutlet, not too well done, spinach, green peas; half of '43, at once, please, and a half of—er—of '97, in a basket, with the Stilton—bring the whole cheese, please!"

But whatever the cause, Dick found himself responding readily to some polite but common-place observation from the old gentleman, and (what was a good deal more remarkable) when he had ceased to pretend that the remains of his chop held any interest for him, Dick positively accepted the elderly stranger's invitation to join him in a glass of port.—"A really very creditable vintage I consider, for a public place; unpretentious, no doubt, but sound, and not unpleasing, I think."

The wine was certainly pleasing enough to Dick's palate, after his ungarnished chop, washed down only by that unremarkable vintage which the water companies are good enough to supply to most of the residents of London—when convenient to themselves.

Dick explained (even one glass of good old port exerts a distinctly lubricatory effect upon a young man's tongue) his disappointment of that evening, in the matter of his weekly billiards in the hall below.

"Well, now," said the old gentleman; "I am fond of a game of billiards after dinner myself, when—er—particularly

Digitized by Google

after having carried any affair to a satisfactory conclusion, as I may say that I have this afternoon. With your permission, my dear sir, I shall be delighted to try and take the place, for an hour, of the gentleman who has disappointed you this evening; or, since it is perhaps presumptuous of me to expect to take a young man's place, let me say that I will endeavour to mitigate in some part the loss caused you by his absence."

"A really delightful old chap!" thought Dick, as he smilingly assented. "He talks like an old play." The stranger ordered a bottle of '97, the old port, to be sent downstairs to the billiard-room, and together the oddly-matched couple chose a table. Dick removed his coat and hung it up, with the light dust-coat which he was carrying, upon the hook which he always used for the purpose. His elderly companion made no change, however, in his dress, and the fact rather caught Dick's attention, by reason that the old gentleman was wearing a light top-coat, on this warm evening.

The port was opened while they chalked their cues, and, at the end of an evenly contested game of "a hundred up," the old gentleman called for another bottle.

"I don't think I'll take any more, thank you," interposed Dick, a little awkwardly, and speaking also, it must be admitted, a trifle thickly. The fact was he was thinking that he ought to order something for his hospitable companion, and the thought of the probable cost of that "very creditable vintage" frightened him. But the old gentleman poohpoohed the notion of not having any more port.

"Why, my dear young friend," said he, to his acquaintance of two hours' standing; "life after dinner would be intolerable but for port. You have my word for it, my dear sir, there is not half a headache in a hogshead of this particular wine. I know it well."

The young man was persuaded, and played two further games with his host, both of which he won. The fact that Dick took but one glass of wine during the progress of these two games may conceivably have had something to do with his winning.

Seeing the hour was close upon eleven, Dick said he must leave at the end of this third game. The old gentleman protested that the evening was young. He drew off his coat, hung it up, and pressed his dear young friend to give him his revenge in "fifty up" at all events. In courtesy Dick felt obliged to yield to this, and the heat of the room made an iced whisky and soda grateful to him, after the port. This short game ended, Dick asked the marker for his coat, and firmly declined his elderly friend's invitation to further play.

"Well, then, if you really must go, my dear young friend," said the stranger, "I shall play just one more game with this good man here"—indicating the smiling marker—"and then go off to bed myself. I have to thank you for a most agreeable evening spent in the society of the most congenial—a most pleasing close to a satisfactory day for me. I trust I may again have the pleasure—er—Good-night, my dear young friend; good-night!"

And so, with rather brighter eyes than usual, and carrying his head very erectly, Dick walked off, carrying his dust-coat and an evening paper upon one arm, his gloves in the other hand, and in his mind a conviction that life was not really so drab a business as one might fancy, even for a junior clerk with a hundred and twenty pounds a year.

On his way to Brixton, Dick dozed for a few minutes, and finding on his arrival at "Carrington Villa" that his mother and sister had already retired for the night, he decided to make directly for bed himself. In hanging his coat in the hall, Dick's hand rested for a moment upon the upper inside pocket of the garment, and:

"Now what have I put there I wonder!" he muttered, sleepily.

A moment later, and he was standing under the hall gas lamp, a bulky Morocco pocket-book in one hand, the light top coat in the other.

"Why, good gad!" he exclaimed aloud. "It's not my coat at all!"

Then he walked into the stuffy little "front parlour," and, having turned up the gas, sat down at the centre table to examine this pocket-book. Dick was not at all sleepy now.

The first thing he drew from the case was a flat wad of bank notes held together by a rubber band. There were five for one hundred pounds each, four for fifty, ten for ten pounds, and three for five.

Eight hundred and fifteen pounds. The junior clerk almost gasped. Then there were various memoranda, including a note of the numbers of all these, and some other, bank notes. There were several cards bearing the name of "Mr. Rupert Ball, 122, Portgavon Road, S.W." Then—and poor Dick's eyes glittered at the discovery—rolled in silk, and encased in a little leather pouch, he found eighteen uncut diamonds of a sort which the veriest ignoramus in such matters could not but regard with admiration. Dick felt that these jewels must represent a far larger sum than the value of the bank notes, and had he guessed six times that sum, he would as a fact still have been well within the mark.

"Good heavens!" muttered Dick at length, leaning back in his chair. "I suppose it belongs to the little old man at the Regency. Thousands of pounds—Great Scott! and all in the pocket of a common or garden top coat, the very image of mine! Thousands of pounds—and I suppose he has thousands more; and I—Pooh! That's nothing whatever to do with it. But still—H'm! And only this morning Madge was saying how she wished to goodness we even had enough capital to allow of our going out to California, or to South Africa, or anywhere out of this stuffy—Oh, dear! What's the good of thinking of all that? The thing's of no more value to us than a piece of string. Of course I shall have to take it back. Portgavon Road—H'm! But, Great Scott, what a find!"

And then, slowly, Dick replaced its contents in the Morocco pocket-book, and slowly, sadly, betook himself to bed, the book in his hand, the mellowing influence of that evening's wine, and his inclination for rest alike departed from him utterly.

* * * * * *

It was a restless, miserable night that Dick passed. The mere thought that the value of several thousands of pounds lay under his pillow, seemed to fence off sleep from the head above the pillow. It was singular that the temporary possession of riches which did not belong to him should increase the distance between himself and the dainty Lottie Crane. But it did. Never had Dick felt so hopeless regarding the girl he had learnt to love beside old Thames at Maidenhead, as he did when he met his mother and sister at breakfast on that Sunday morning.

"Good heavens!" he thought, as he looked round the dingy little apartment. "How could I ever have thought of asking her to share this sort of thing? It's absolutely beyond the bounds of things possible."

And his hopelessness robbed him of what might have been a pleasure, when he came to make his little presents to Madge and her mother; the trifles he had purchased on the previous evening in Regent Street.

After breakfast, he retired to his room, and again examined the contents of the pocket-book.

"With this," he muttered; "I could start a new life out there—somewhere—out in the open, away from all this sordidness. And Madge would bloom like—Oh, look here;! This won't do. By gad, I'm losing my head. It isn't safe. I'll go and tell them about it."

Digitized by Google

And he walked down the skimpy little staircase, warned by a wholesome instinct that in this case safety lay in taking counsel.

You may be sure the women-kind were finely flustered. Dick's mother had never been a strong-minded woman. Her misfortunes of the past two years had shaken her life to its very foundations. She never had practised economy; the necessity for it irked her almost beyond endurance. Her health had been very indifferent since her husband's tragic end.

"Dick," she said, after a long pause. "I don't see why you shouldn't—I—It seems providential. Oh, my dear Dick, you know how sorely we need help!"

"Goodness; this is cheerful!" muttered Dick. "But, I say, you know, mother!" he said aloud.

"Why, mother, dearest, what can you be thinking of," cried Madge, flushing to the roots of her fair hair. "Of course Dick will take the thing at once to this Mr.—what-ever-his-name-is, in Portgavon Road—Of course!"

"H'm! Yes; of course, I shall," agreed Dick; and felt some relief.

"Well, well, my dear; I don't know. You know best. But, oh, this dreadful, scraping, cheese-paring life—I——"

And poor Mrs. Langley dissolved into tears, her worried mind occupied by hazy pictures of her old, luxurious life at Maidenhead. The world is full of such people, in these days of rapid fortune-making, and losing; and their cases are very hard, and sad.

At three o'clock that afternoon Dick Langley turned out of Porchester Street into Portgavon Road; and in his breast-pocket was the famous case, with its wealth of bank notes and diamonds. Number 122 proved to be a huge, sombre-looking house, divided into three flats. A footman in plain black clothes answered Dick's knock, and informed him that Mr. Ball was at home. Dick was shown into a dining room which had every appearance of being very seldom used; and in a few moments there entered to him there his elderly acquaintance of the Regency Restaurant, looking, Dick thought, a good deal worried.

"Ah!" began the old gentleman. "My excellent young friend of last evening. I thought I did not know the name James gave me—er—Mr. Langley, I think. H'm! Ah; yes; the name is not altogether unfamiliar, I think; all the same. Ah—er——"

"I suspect you are thinking of my father, who died two years ago," said Dick. And the old gentleman hastened to tide over what seemed an awkward moment.

"Ah! And how did you find me out, now? I am very pleased to see you I'm sure—er—very pleased. I must tell you that our pleasant evening had a most unfortunate, a most disastrous ending for me. Yes, really disastrous. I went upstairs to have a devilled biscuit, after my last game, you know, and hung my coat on a rack at the door of the supper room. And, if you'll believe me, sir, some rascal took it from there while I was at my biscuits, and left in place of it, one rather like mine, I must admit, but—er—quite unlike mine in the pocket, I do assure you; for there was a matter of close upon ten thousand pounds in diamonds and notes, in my pocket-book; the result of negotiations of that very evening—very successful negotiations, too."

"Well, well," thought Dick; "he hasn't an idea of the true state of the case. He will smile when he sees the coat I am sitting on." Dick had thrown the old gentleman's light coat, which he himself had carried from Brixton this afternoon, on the back of the chair in which he sat. He now rose to reach it more conveniently. As he did so, the door of the room opened, and a young girl entered, dressed for walking, and saying:

"Oh, uncle; there's someone come to see you. Please don't let them keep you too—Oh, Dick! However could you!"

It was Lottie Crane, quite unaware till the moment that her uncle had found his visitor, and never dreaming who that visitor might be.

"Why, what the dickens does the girl mean? Eh? What! Dick? What d'ye mean, child?"

"My name is Dick, sir," explained that young man, with a smile.

"Well; but what the—tut——"

"And I've come to bring you your coat, and pocket-book, sir, which the billiard-marker gave me last night in place of my own. The diamonds and the notes are quite safe."

"Eh? What? You've got the coat, and the book? Well, bless my soul! But how the——"

"Darling uncle, this is Dick, you know. I told you about Dick last Christmas. And Dick is—Dick, you know, is——"

"Oh, tut, tut! God bless my soul and body!"

"Well, darling uncle, you know you said yourself this morning that you played billiards last night with the most agreeable young man in London. Well, uncle, dear, that—that's Dick, you know!"

And Dick is quite learned about diamonds now, though at the diamond-merchant's office they say he will never make the expert man of business that his uncle-in-law still is. And that is quite possible; but they are a very happy pair, Dick and Lottie; and they say that Madge, who lives with her mother at Deepdene, will marry Spargrave.

And so you see, life, like the curate's egg in the story, is "very good in parts, my lord!"

A. J. Dawson.

Digitized by Google

Troubled Matchmaking.

The Story of a Desirable Engagement.

On the death of her father Elsie Roscoe went to live with her aunt, and in due course Mrs. Bailey proceeded to gratify her desire to exercise her powers as a match-maker.

Mrs. Bailey had longed for such an opportunity; she had no children of her own, and her brother had been a man who did not brook interference with his domestic arrangements. Mrs. Bailey had endeavoured to persuade him that he really ought to permit her to see about a husband for Elsie, but he had always cut her short with the remark that Elsie would attend to that matter on her own account when she wished to. Elsie appeared to be quite indifferent on the subject, helping her father with his scientific researches, and taking a more sober view of life than is common with young women of her age.

Mrs. Bailey's opportunity came with the change in the condition of things, and she decided in favour of a gentleman named Monckton.

Mr. John Monckton was about ten years older than Elsie, and reputed to be in very comfortable circumstances. He lived in Wilsford, but he was connected with a large business in the town, and went backwards and forwards every day to the office. He was very quiet and reserved, and all that was really known about his business was that he had an office with a clerk or two, but did a large commission business in British and foreign goods.

"Just the man for Elsie!" declared Mrs. Bailey. "She has been brought up very staidly, and she wants a man of the same temperament and mode of life. And she will make him a good wife, too. A splendid match!"

The disparity of age was not serious; possibly, he was not ten years older. His appearance was not stylish; it would not have attracted a town-bred young woman, probably, but Elsie was different. She made a few discreet inquiries concerning Monckton, and these inquiries were made outside Wilsford so that there should be no false notions concerning the man. The result was satisfactory.

Mrs. Bailey soon contrived that Mr. John Monckton and Elsie should meet frequently. He was invited to the villa after three or four meetings, and finally she succeeded in bringing the match to pass. John Monckton proposed and was accepted. Not exactly a love match on Elsie's part, but love would come after marriage. She respected him, and thought a great deal of him, so what more was to be desired?

Mrs. Bailey kept the engagement secret for the greater part of a week, and then handed a notice to the editor of the local weekly just in time to secure its admission in the issue published on Saturday. She strictly enjoined him to secrecy. Thus it came about that the announcement of the engagement was made to friends in Wilsford through the medium of the local journal.

Elsie had gone to the house of a friend some miles away and intended to return that evening. Mrs. Bailey read the notice with much gratification, and waited with conscious pride for the numerous congratulations that were certain to pour in.

It was about eleven o'clock when the first visitor was announced; this was the vicar of the parish, the Rev. Algernon Sanders. He looked grave, as if he had come to offer condolence instead of congratulations.

"I saw a notice in the Wilsford *Express* this morning, Mrs. Bailey"—he began, as though delivering a text—"and I—er—that is, I suppose it is correct?"

"Certainly!" replied Mrs. Bailey stiffly.

She had never got on very well with the vicar; he would do things in a way that she considered to be quite wrong, and he was not so amenable to reasoning—Mrs. Bailey's reasoning, that is—as he ought to have been! Still, they were quite friendly, although she had once threatened to cease attendance at his church and betake herself to the sacred edifice in the next village. His manner on this present occasion jarred on her nerves, and she was ready to assert herself if necessary.

"Then I am sorry to hear it!" said the vicar with such bluntness that he left her speechless for the space of fully sixty seconds.

"Yes, I am sorry to hear it!" repeated the vicar with emphasis. "Miss Roscoe is an excellent young woman, and she ought not to throw herself away on that good-for-nothing Monckton!"

"Mr. Monckton is an honourable gentleman!" she burst forth. "He is held in high esteem by every person in this place, and his reputation in the town where he conducts his business is all that could be desired. I think you owe me an explanation, sir!"

The vicar looked uncomfortable.

"I have reason to know, Mrs. Bailey, that the reputation of Mr. Monckton is not so good!" he said mildly. "I admit that he is generally esteemed, but that is because certain facts, known to a few, have been kept confidential by those few. His financial position is a very bad one, I should say, but I feel that it is not my place to say more, as *I* am not one of the vic—sufferers. I came to give you a hint, and I will leave you to regard it or not as you please. I fear that my presence is not welcome, so I will withdraw!"

He did so, and Mrs. Bailey sat still and pondered. What on earth did the man mean? Her feelings were like those of a man who has undertaken a task different from any in which he has had previous experience, and who finds that he has been over-confident of success. Had she made a blunder as a match-maker? She tried to assure herself that she had not, but the vicar was not a man to say such a thing without foundation, even if he were an unreasonable individual.

"Here's a note, ma'am," said the maid, entering at this moment. "I don't know when it came. It was dropped in through the letter-box."

Mrs. Bailey took the note with a certain sentiment of relief. This was a congratulation from someone who knew Mr. Monckton in the town, or it would not have been dropped through the letter-box anonymously. Good paper! The writer must be comfortably off!

Mrs. Bailey opened the envelope and looked for the address at the head of the letter, but it was quite plain; she looked for the signature, but that also was missing. Then she read the communication and a troubled expression overspread her countenance.

Digitized by Google

It was brief, and contained a warning. John Monckton was not what he seemed; he was reputed to be well-to-do, but this was incorrect. He was hard-up. What did he do with his money? The inference was that he did not pass the entire day in his office, but had some more agreeable occupation! Was he really travelling when he was away?

"I don't like anonymous communications!" said Mrs. Bailey aloud. "Still, there is truth in them at times!" she admitted in the next breath. "I must get to the bottom of this! Dear me, match-making is not so pleasant as I thought it was! I have been priding myself on having made a better selection for Elsie than she would have made for herself, but I really wonder if it is quite wise to take the matter entirely out of the hands of the party most interested!"

Mrs. Bailey had little time left for reflection. Another visitor was announced in the person of Mrs. Dr. Gillett—that was how she was popularly named in Wilsford—who came in hurriedly.

"I saw the notice," said the bustling wife of the village medico, after the usual greetings had been exchanged. "But you surely do not mean to say that dear Elsie has actually become engaged to that man?"

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Bailey, flaring up. She was getting tired of the disparagement of the husband selected for Elsie; she could not understand that everyone else knew that he was a bad subject and that she alone had been gulled. "Why not?" she repeated with emphasis.

"Because he is insolvent! Because he is worse than that, he borrows money off his friends and doesn't pay!" said Mrs. Gillett just as defiantly. "There!"

Mrs. Bailey rather admired the Doctor's wife, and she was impressed with the frank declaration. Yet she felt that she must defend her choice.

"There is some mistake!" she declared. "He is perfectly honourable, and he satisfied me as to his financial position. I went thoroughly into that, you may be quite sure!"

"I'll prove it to you!" cried Mrs. Gillett. "I'll fetch his I.O.U. for the twenty-five pounds my husband lent him!"

She went off in a hurry, but she was back almost before Mrs. Bailey had time to realise that she had had time to perform the journey. She pushed a paper into Mrs. Bailey's unwilling hands. There was no mistake about it; an I.O.U. for twenty-five pounds, signed by John Monckton, stared at her.

"He has borrowed quite five hundred pounds from people about here," said Mrs. Gillett. "He pretends that he wants the money to complete a purchase; he only wants it for a fortnight or three weeks, till he receives payment of various large accounts. My husband lent it; he wondered why Mr. Monckton didn't keep his word, but thought that he would remember it and pay. The Doctor felt reluctant to remind him, as he was so honourable a man. They do not meet often, or the subject might have come up in conversation. In fact, Mr. Monckton is so reserved and so seldom meets anyone to have a chat, that it is a wonder he ventured to ask for the loan, that was what we thought. But it is all coming out now, and the Doctor and others had decided to wait on him this afternoon and claim payment when we saw the notice of his engagement to Elsie."

Poor Mrs. Bailey was in despair; she stated her intention of calling on Mr. Monckton during the afternoon, and asked that the proposed visit of creditors should be postponed till the evening.

Mrs. Bailey tried to eat a little lunch, but the attempt was a failure. She was getting ready to go to Monckton's villa at the other end of the long, straggling village when Elsie Roscoe returned.

"My dear Elsie, I am glad to see you back!" cried her aunt fervently. "I have been much upset this morning, and—and—but it isn't so bad as it might be, seeing that you might have been married before it was found out, and you don't really love him!"

Elsie stared at her aunt, and turned pale.

"I don't understand, aunt!" she faltered. "Is there anything wrong? Has any accident happened to Jack? O don't keep me in suspense! Let me know the worst at once. Oh, my dear Jack!"

"She really loves him!" groaned Mrs. Bailey in despair. There was no mistaking the fact; it was patent in the girl's manner and expression. "People are saying discreditable things about him, Elsie, dear, and——"

"Well?" asked Elsie, her manner changing.

"I can't say, of course, my dear!" protested Mrs. Bailey, noticing the change from anxiety to indignation, "but there seems to be some foundation for them!"

"Tell me what they say!" commanded Elsie with decision. "My Jack is above anything discreditable, and I insist on knowing what calumnies have been uttered against him, so that I may defend him!"

Her aunt had never seen Elsie look so proud and defiant. She related what had passed and showed the anonymous letter. Elsie put it into her pocket.

"I am going to see John," she said briefly. "I will tell him all, and it will be bad for those who have tried to slander him!"

"I am afraid he will feel insulted," moaned Mrs. Bailey, "yet—I saw the I.O.U.!"

Elsie went through the village with a defiant expression on her usually placid face, her head poised proudly, and every movement indicative of a determination to defend her lover against all comers. People wondered to see her walk through the village so haughtily, and began to say to one another that she need not be so proud at having become engaged to Mr. Monckton.

Elsie had not been gone long before Mrs. Bailey's maid brought in a card inscribed with the name of John Monckton.

"Ask him in!" said the widow, when she had recovered from her surprise. "I can have it out quietly with him," she added under her breath. "Perhaps it is well that Elsie is out, although he will be disappointed!"

Mr. John Monckton entered. He was a man of medium height, rather too stout for his number of inches, but upright and more quick of movement than one would have anticipated. His face was half concealed by a wealth of moustache and beard, and a pair of spectacles with large, round glasses. The kind of man who does not attract at first sight, but who improves very much on acquaintance.

He said "Good afternoon, Mrs. Bailey!" in a brisk manner, but he appeared to be suffering slightly from hoarseness, and he seated himself modestly in a corner where he was out of the draughts and also in obscurity.

"It is rather a pity that Elsie has just gone out, Mr. Monckton. She must have missed you, for she went to see if you were at home. However, I am not sorry, as——"

"Oh, it doesn't matter at all!" was the rather startling reply. "I prefer to see you alone just now. Never mind Elsie. You will excuse me, but I am somewhat hoarse. I have a request to make, just a small favour to ask. I am in great need of a little loan for a few days till I get some accounts paid, a mere matter of twenty-five pounds! It is like that in business sometimes; one has to sink so much capital in the stock and so on. Do you think that you could oblige me?"

Mrs. Bailey sat speechless with amazement and anger. At length she burst forth vehemently:—

"You are a rogue, a swindler, and I have a good mind to hand you over to justice! To think that——"

But Mr. John Monckton did not wait to hear the finish; he had appeared uneasy from the first moment, but the outburst threw him off his balance entirely. He sprang up and made a dash through the door into the hall, where he literally ran into the arms of his exact counterpart, behind whom stood Elsie

Digitized by Google

"Ha!" cried the new-comer, gripping the man who had rushed into his arms. "So I have caught you! I did not expect to have such luck. You wretched scoundrel! You have turned up again to impersonate me and rob my friends of their money and me of my good name! Stand aside, Elsie, and I'll thrash him through the village!"

The inhabitants of Wilsford were treated to the uncommon spectacle of seeing Mr. John Monckton belabouring Mr. John Monckton with a stout walking stick half way through the village street. By the time the victim of this vigorous treatment had got away from the stick, he had lost his glasses and his beard was awry, and he looked less like Mr. John Monckton than he had originally done.

"That's a cousin of mine," explained Elsie's lover to Mrs. Bailey, a little later. "He resembles me very much in build and features, and it is not difficult for him to make up a bit. He impersonated me some time ago, and narrowly escaped imprisonment. I thought he had left the country, and I have grown a beard since then. Unfortunately this addition to my person has made it more easy for him to impersonate me, and I shall have to discard it! Such effrontry to come here, to this house! I suppose you detected the difference in the voice and certain differences in appearance and manner, which intimate friends and relations perceive quickly, and so he was exposed?"

"I am afraid I did not," admitted Mrs. Bailey shamefacedly. "He pretended to be hoarse, he sat in a dark corner, and I was so agitated! I called him a rogue and a swindler because what he said was so different from what you had said and I thought I was addressing you!"

Mr. Monckton laughed good-naturedly.

"It was a case of a guilty conscience! He thought you had found him out, so he bolted. Now I must find out how much money he has had in my name and repay it. It is a pity they did not call upon me to redeem the I.O.U.'s, for I should have been spared a good deal of money! I have wondered why some people have seemed so distant lately!"

Inquiry showed that the pseudo John Monckton had practised the same trick to aid the deception as he had tried on Mrs. Bailey; he always had a cold, and paid his visit either in the twilight or sat in a dark corner.

Congratulations poured in as soon as the mystery was cleared up, and the ceremony at the village church was something to be remembered. The vicar performed the marriage ceremony so well that Mrs. Bailey has been on better terms with him ever since.

George Day.

Elderly Lodger: "How did you sleep last night, Professor?" Professor Larkins (testily): "Lying down, madam."

The Bashful Lover: "Miss Agnes, I—er—hem!" She (sweetly): "*Do* you, Mr. Mammasdear? Now *wouldn't* you like to join our sewing class?"

Father: "I am inexpressibly shocked. Your mother tells me that you are engaged to three young men." Daughter: "It's all right, papa. They are all football players, and when the season closes I can marry the survivor."

Nice Old Lady: "Will you kindly tell me if the lady who writes 'The Mother's Page' every week in your paper is in? I want to tell her how much I have enjoyed reading her articles on 'The Evening Hour in the Nursery.'" Office Boy: "That's him over there with the pink shirt, smokin' a pipe."

"Miss Twilling," said Mr. Calloway, glancing down at his shining boots with a complacent air, "don't you like to see a man looking as if he had stepped out of a band-box, his clothes nicely brushed, and everything about him indicating refinement?" "Yes, Mr. Calloway, I do," answered Miss Twilling, with a significant look. "I like to see such a man as you have described about once a year."

Is Your Birthday This Week?

We have recently secured the services of a well-known astrologer, and below will be found his information for this week's birthdays.

September 9. — Rather a favourable year for business for those whose birthdays fall to-day. Good for health and general affairs. Those in employ need to exercise care or they will lose it.

Girls born in the early morning will become engaged.

The day is good to do business, speculate, sign papers, and travel.

A child born to-day will be fortunate in business, will be clever, and rise in life.

September 10.—Those who celebrate birthdays to-day may expect a changeable year. Should avoid changing residence. Guard against loss.

Girls will find love affairs very interesting, but if born early they will need care against deceit.

The day is good to deal with elderly people, but beware of promising speculations. Have a care with horses.

A child born to-day will never be settled, and if a girl the prospects of marriage are not good.

September 11.—Little progress; much anxiety and worry are indicated here. Strong opposition if in business; trouble with writings and landlords.

Young girls will have obstacles and disappointment in love affairs; those born near six p.m. will meet with strange experiences.

The day is one to keep quiet on, and let others make the first move in matters of business. Don't change residence here.

A child born this day will be subject to many vicissitudes, and should keep in employ of others.

September 12.—A dull year; disappointment in business and sickness in domestic circle. Beware of law and monetary losses. Bad for farmers.

Girls born near six a.m. must beware of broken promises, and should place but little confidence in opposite sex.

The day is bad to speculate, deal with elderly people, or sign agreements.

A child born to-day will be wise to keep in the employ of others.

September 13.—A quiet year; business much as usual.

Girls must beware of attentions from married men.

The day is not good for changes, or asking favours; go steady.

A child born here will be fond of change and will go abroad if born from noon to three p.m.

September 14.—The year will be good for business, and bring many useful friends. Guard against quarrels, or you go to law.

Girls will find much discord in love affairs, chiefly through third parties.

A child born here will be subject to many mishaps, but fortunate in business. Will be clever, though stubborn and rash.

September 15.—A mixed year; beware of accident and of fire. Farmers, builders, and elderly people are favoured.

Young girls will have a quiet time in love matters.

The day is good to buy property, land, or deal with landlords. Beware of mishaps between nine and ten p.m.

A child born to-day will be fortunate and rise in life. The mind will be steady and painstaking; the wit keen.

Asturel.

Digitized by Google

The Stranger from London.

A Romance of a Country Village.

It had fairly poured for two days, and I had waded through all the newspapers and other reading matter to be had at the little hotel at which I was staying.

The landlord, Mr. Carpenter, was a jolly old fellow who was noted for his lively stories, and he did his best to entertain his guests and keep up their spirits as they sat in the porch of the Wayside house and watched the steady downpour.

I did not join the group in the porch. If there is anything I particularly dislike it is to listen to the chatter of a lot of people who are trying to delude themselves into the belief that they are enjoying life when the face of Nature is ankle deep with mud and water, and it is still raining as if it never intended to stop. So I kept to my room and read books, week-old newspapers, patent medicine almanacs—anything that would help me in a measure to forget the abominable weather.

But on the evening of the second day, when it grew suddenly colder and a roaring wood fire had been kindled in the open fireplace in the big sitting-room, I was one of the first to gather round its cheerful blaze.

Now, if ever, was the time for story-telling, but the landlord's repertoire seemed to be about exhausted.

"No use asking for any more funny stories," he drawled out with a deprecatory shake of the head. "These two wet days have pumped me dry, so to speak. I can only think of one more story, but as there isn't anything comical about that one, I don't suppose you'll care to hear it."

"Give us a story, by all means," urged one of the ladies. "I can always sleep better if I have a ghost story or some exciting adventures to go to bed on."

"Well," began the landlord, reflectively, "I don't think this comes under the head of a ghost story nor even a story of adventure. I'll have to tell it, and let you classify it for yourselves.

"The climax of my story came ten years ago when I was keeping a hotel in my native village, but the beginning dated back many years before that, to the time when the Peeks were the nabobs of the place.

"Squire Peek, with his wife and only daughter, lived in a big white house on a hill on the outskirts of the village, and a haughty, high-stepping old chap he was when I first knew him.

"He always seemed to consider himself and his family a little above the rest of the folks in the village and when Lucinda Peek grew up, although she was by a long way the best looking young lady in the place, and while the young fellows were all half daft over her, none of them really had the courage to make love to her for fear of arousing the wrath of the stiff-necked old squire.

"The first one who tried it was an outsider, and the ruthless way in which his aspirations were nipped in the bud by Lucinda's father held forth very little encouragement to the others.

"He was a young college student, named Harry Randell, who had come into the country to spend his summer holidays in earning some needed money. Though dependent wholly on his own earnings, he was bravely working his way through college, it seems, and he got a job keeping the books and making up accounts at the village shop in the daytime, and at night he gave lessons on the violin and other musical instruments. He was a first-class singer, too, and soon after coming to the place he started a singing school, hiring the schoolhouse and charging a good fee for lessons, which he gave every Thursday evening.

"It was at the singing school that he made the acquaintance of Lucinda Peek, and it was a clear case of love at first sight. He was a manly young fellow, and when people saw how matters were shaping, everyone wished him well.

"But the course of true love runs uncommonly rough sometimes as the poet tells about, and when young Randell walked boldly up to the big house on the hill with Lucinda one evening, and asked her father for her hand in marriage, it was said that the haughty old squire drove him from the house with the direst threats and curses that one man ever poured upon the head of another. It was then near the close of his vacation, and Randell was compelled to return to his college without again seeing Lucinda.

"It was said that letters addressed to Lucinda in young Randell's handwriting came after he went away, but the postmaster, who was a friend and sort of dependent of the squire, saw to it that none of them ever reached her. Finally one of the letters received after Randell had left the place, was returned to him so I've heard, with the notification across the face of it that the person to whom it was addressed, was dead.

"It was a cruel and wicked thing to do, but such things will happen when a penniless student falls in love with a nabob's daughter.

"Years passed. Squire Peek finally died, and then it was discovered that most of his fortune had been wasted in unwise speculations. The big house on the hill was sold, and mother and daughter moved into a small cottage at the other end of the village. A year later Mrs. Peek died (of a broken heart, it was said), and Lucinda was left alone in the world.

"She was now thirty years of age, and though there was a look of settled sadness on her countenance, she was still the handsomest woman in the place, and it was rumoured that she had refused many flattering offers of marriage.

"Well, ten years went by, and those of us who had been young once were growing old, Lucinda among the rest. One of the banks had failed that spring, business was almost at a standstill, and the country round was in a bad way generally. Right in the midst of the stagnation a stranger suddenly appeared in the village. He was a middle-aged gentleman,

with iron-grey hair and beard, and had the air of a prosperous business man.

"He took rooms at the hotel, saying he was from London, and was looking round for some quiet village in which to spend the summer. I told him I thought he would find things quiet enough, just then, and he said, in a sort of absent-minded way:

"'Yes, it does seem quieter than it used to.'

"'Why, when were you here before?' I asked, giving him a quick look, and vainly trying to place him.

"He coloured up and said he had been thinking of something else when he spoke, and the matter was dropped.

"Well, the first night he was there he sat about, listening to every word that was said by the villagers who dropped in, but taking no part in the conversation. After awhile the crowd began to discuss the bank trouble, and one of the party said:

"'Too bad about Lucinda Peek, isn't it? They say she lost every penny she had by the bank failure, and it is only a question of time when she will have to give up her cottage and go out to work for a living.'

"Before the sentence was fairly ended, the stranger jumped up, with a face white as a sheet.

"'For God's sake, tell me quick!' he gasped—'is Lucinda Peek alive?'

"'Why, of course she's alive,' said I.

"'And her father and mother?' he asked next.

"'They're both dead,' I replied.

"'And she no longer lives on the big house in the hill—in her old home?' he questioned eagerly.

"'No,' said I; 'she is now living in a small cottage near the——'

"'Excuse me for interrupting,' he broke in, impatiently. 'My name is Randell. I used to know Miss Peek. I must see her at once. Have you someone you can send with me to show me the way to her house?'

"I called in Joe, my man of all work; and, by the way, Joe is still in my employ, and I think I'd better let him tell the rest of the story."

Stepping to the door opening into the hotel kitchen, the landlord called out:

"Here, Joe; come in and tell the ladies and gentlemen what happened the night you showed the stranger from London the way to Miss Peek's cottage."

"Well," began Joe, apologetically, as he stepped into the room, "I think ye'll all be disapp'inted, because there didn't anything happen wuth mentionin' scarcely. In the first place, the gentleman didn't say a word all the way to the cottage—jest walked; that's all; an' I had to run purty nigh all the way to keep up with him.

"An' when we got to the gate, an' I told him that was the place, he went flyin' up the path an' began knockin' at the door as if he was there on very urgent business. In a minute or so, Miss Peek opened the door, an' I heard him say: 'Lucinda, don't you know me?' and she held out both hands an' said: 'Why, it's Henry!' an' the next minute they were hangin' on to each other, laughin' an' cryin' both at once, like a pair of softies, an' I seen I had no further bizness there, so I come away an' left 'em; an' that's all that happened."

"You have forgotten one important item in your story, Joe, and that is the present that Mr. Randell gave you for showing him the way to the cottage," suggested the landlord, smilingly.

"Oh, yes," said Joe, "the gentleman handed me a five pound note the next day, an' when I told him it was too much, he said:

"'No, my man, you earned every penny of it, and more besides.'

"My conscience troubled me considerably for taking it, though, for a day or so, but when I heard that he gave the village clergyman £25 for marryin' him an' Lucinda, —an' only a five-minutes' job at that—I made up my mind that Mr. Randell must be a millionaire an' left off worrying about it."

W. S. Gidley.

Your Editor Chats.

THE NEW SERIAL.

At last I am able to announce to you the title of the new serial story which I hope to commence in the course of a few weeks time. It is to be called "A Foe in the Family," and though somewhat different in style from our present serial, will, nevertheless, I feel sure, hold your attention and interest quite as well as, and even more—if that were possible—than that story has done. I will be able to give you the exact date of its commencement shortly. It will, however, follow immediately upon the conclusion of our present serial, and as, at last, the dark clouds which have up to now blackened poor Alec Scarsdale's life are just beginning to show their silver lining, the grand climax, in which our hero emerges triumphantly from out of great tribulations, cannot be far off.

FREE GRAMOPHONES.

Regarding our scheme for supplying certain lucky readers of Short Stories with gramophones gratis, of which I made a preliminary announcement last week, I may fairly say that the scheme is now complete, and next week I hope to give you full details of the competition.

"THROUGH THE PERIL OF THE NIGHT."

Next week's coloured cover you will find represented in miniature on page 344. The picture depicts a most thrilling incident in a powerful story entitled "Through the Peril of the Night," which we have been at no little pains to procure. The girl is a somnambulist, and in her sleep is walking along the telegraph wires because she feels sure that her lover is begging her to come to him in order to escape some danger. What the danger is, of course, the story tells, as also the dramatic sequel to her terrible journey. Undoubtedly it will be the tale of the week.

C. Y. N. T. H. I. A.

By the way, I received some excellent results from our "Cynthia" competition. Seldom indeed has a competition been more popular, and many and curious were the sentences sent in. All sorts of subjects were dealt with—humorous, pathetic, serious, and extraordinary, while the best one dealt with the subject of the innocent and lovable Cynthia herself. The winning sentence constructed of words the initial letters of which formed the name Cynthia was:

"Change Your Name To Hope I Advise."

This excellent result was sent in by Mrs. E. Ryan, of 21 Abbott's Road, East Ham, E., and consequently the first prize goes to her. Many other good sentences were sent, and consolation gifts go to the following:

S. White, 162 Camberwell New Road, S.E.; H. Martin, Superintendent Peabody Buildings, Herne Hill; W. Tombs, 13 St. Olaves House, Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington; J. S. Ryan, 21 Abbott's Road, East Ham, E.; E. Tudor Marsh, Villa Chrysanthème, Ellison Road, Streatham Common; H. Barnes, 2 Vauxhall Walk, S.E.; H. C. Pickard, 46 St. Giles' Street, Northampton; C. Windsor, 11 Ramsden Terrace, North Street, Leeds; T. Allison, 18 Fleet Street, Gorton, Manchester; S. L. Baines, 6 Ingatestone Road, Woodford Green.

Your Editor.

Digitized by Google

THE CONFESSIONS OF CYNTHIA.

Revelations in High Life by a Lady's Companion.

The writer of this series of true stories acted for many years in the capacity of lady's companion to a Society adventuress who lived by robbing her unsuspecting guests. Names have, for obvious reasons, been altered, but the facts are correct.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:

Mrs. NORTON	An adventuress who makes her money by robbing her friends.
CYNTHIA	Her cousin and companion who, when the events related below took place, was quite unsuspicious of Mrs. Norton's guilt.
FLUFFY	An accomplice of Mrs. Norton's.
LORD KINROSS	One of Mrs. Norton's most devoted admirers.
SIR JOHN STRICKLAND	A poor baronet who is deeply in love with Mrs. Norton.
MARY VERNON . . .	At one time engaged to be married to Lord Kinross.
HIRAM PETTIGREW .	An American millionaire.
PERCIVAL HOPE . . .	Pettigrew's secretary.
CASELLIS	A man from Jamaica who knows Mrs. Norton's past history.

Mrs. Norton: Adventuress.

Cynthia: Her companion.

THE STORY STARTS HERE.

HAVING arrived in England from a Bruges convent to be companion to my cousin, Frances Norton, I soon discovered that my cousin was taking part in midnight card games, at which large sums of money were lost and won. The climax came one night when Mary Vernon staked her diamond earrings (a gift from Lord Kinross), and one of the onlookers found them to be paste. The diamonds, it appears, were stolen by Mrs. Norton.

A few weeks later, my cousin, with Fluffy's help, stole a pocket-book, containing abouteight thousand pounds in paper money, from Hiram Pettigrew, an American millionaire, at the Café Regal.

We next moved into a house in Pont Street, and it is while here that Sir John Strickland, a poor baronet, proposed to Frankie, and was refused.

Later on Lord Kinross called at Pont Street for a private interview, and during this interview Percival Hope entered the room unannounced, and made the startling statement that Mary Vernon had discovered the thief who stole her diamonds. Shortly afterwards Frankie left the room; but I stayed, and, unknown to Kinross and Percival Hope, overheard Hope (who turns out to be Kinross' cousin) tell Kinross that in a fortnight's time he would prove that Frankie is an adventuress living upon the proceeds of the robbery of her friends. I told Frankie what I had overheard.

The next evening Lady Gaveston, Frankie's chaperone, informed her that she didn't approve of her behaviour towards Sir John Strickland, and that unless she decided at once either to marry or refuse him, she would return to Scotland. My cousin was given a fortnight's grace in which to make up her mind.

We went to the Derby, where Mrs. Curtis Blount, instigated by jealousy, enticed me to bet heavily, by which I lost £800. Frankie also lost heavily, and to pay our debts, she prevailed upon a young fellow, by promising marriage, to sign his uncle's name to a bill for £5,000.

That same night, at the Duchess of Warminster's ball, my cousin came face to face with a man from Jamaica who knew all about her past life. Percival Hope brought him in. It was a critical moment, but once again Frankie scored, for she managed to buy his silence.

The next day marked the end of the fortnight, during which Hope was to obtain proofs of Frankie's guilt. He and Kinross arrived with Casellis at Pont Street, and Casellis was asked to say what he knew of Frankie's dark past, but, instead of disclosing any unpleasant facts, he swore that she was a perfectly innocent woman.

Several other witnesses were called, but Frankie scored over each one in turn. Thus baffled, Hope left, and Kinross formally asked Frankie to be his wife. They were still in conversation when Sir John Strickland arrived. He had not heard of Frankie's engagement.

Before I could stop him he had gone into the room where my cousin and Kinross were talking. At sight of them he staggered and fell in a dead faint. Doctors were called, and pronounced it a paralytic seizure. Toby next called. In three days his uncle's bill must be redeemed. If this was not done he vowed that he would shoot himself.

Digitized by Google

FRANKIE MAKES A WIFE BREAK FAITH.

Among Frankie's acquaintances at this time was the wife of Horace Grendale, a young M.P. of great ability. He was generally considered to have a big political future before him—whatever that may mean—and was at present private secretary to a member of the Cabinet—the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I think it was.

Toby had introduced my cousin to Mrs. Grendale, who had straightway fallen in love with her. Frankie tolerated her affection, and she became a constant visitor at Pont Street.

She was a pretty woman, one of those sweet, appealing creatures, with melting eyes, a pathetic mouth, and an ingenuousness all infantile. She was the daughter of a country squire, and had seen but little of Society before her marriage. She now burnt with the desire to become a leader thereof.

She modelled herself upon my cousin. What Frankie did Dorothea Grendale—"Dollie" her intimates called her—strove to do likewise.

Her husband was charming but not rich. He, a very ambitious man, worshipped dear Dollie, and regarded her as a miracle, not only of beauty, but of intellect. She could be an admirable listener on occasions, and always turned up at the Commons when he made a speech.

In spite of his affection for her, Dollie's extravagances hit him rather hard. He swallowed milliners' and other bills, but drew the line at gambling debts. "All the smart set gamble," Dollie wailed, but her husband would not listen. She must play no more.

This being so, Mrs. Grendale gambled when she could, upon the nod, and in this way had got into Frankie's debt to the extent of about two thousand pounds. Remembering this, it occurred to me that Frankie might ask her for the money. It would help towards the £5,000 required for Nathan's bill.

I suggested this to Frankie the morning after Toby's call.

"The money must be raised, Frankie, or I'm sure Toby will do something rash. Why shouldn't Dollie pay what she owes you?"

My cousin nodded.

"I'll see what I can do," she said. "I'll go and see her this afternoon. By-the-by, Cynthia, run down and fetch this morning's paper, will you? I want to look at the stocks and shares."

Frankie studied the columns of the *Times* intently. She seemed to derive great satisfaction from the share market, and looked quite bright when she laid the paper down.

"I think we shall meet the bill all right," Cynthia, she said, "if Toby will be sensible. You might take a hansom to Downing Street"—Toby was a clerk in the Home Office—"and tell him, whatever he does, he's not to ask anyone I know to lend him the money. It's too risky."

I did as I was told, had a nice drive, saw Toby, and picked up Lord Chesterton on my way back. I asked him in to lunch. We found Pettigrew installed in the drawing-room, looking pleased with both himself and Frankie.

The millionaire had fought shy of Pont Street for a while, but had gradually drifted into the old state of things. He was as much infatuated with Frankie as ever, but was far more reticent both as to his affairs—and his pocket-books.

He seemed in an expansive humour that day, however; either Frankie or the lunch had loosed his tongue.

"How are things going in the City?" said my cousin. "I look upon you as a Stock Exchange magnate, Mr. Pettigrew. I believe you make millions every day!"

"Not a bit of it, my dear lady," said Pettigrew—pleased none the less.

"I love to hear about the City," said Frankie enthusiastically. "Companies are always exciting, and sometimes romantic."

"Not much romance about Wall Street, anyway," he said grimly. "By the way," he turned to Chesterton, "you don't know anything of politics, I take it? I don't suppose, for instance, you could give me any information as to the state of the game between your country and mine, in reference to this arbitration matter? It's about a strip of territory in South America, Mrs. Norton," he explained, "to which Britain and the United States both lay claim. The negotiations have been pending for years and years, but at last things have come to a head. The decision will shortly be made public; meantime I'm in a fix. I've put a lot of money into a scheme for building railways in that particular quarter of the globe. We're only waiting for certain concessions to be signed to start right away. But the bother of it is that we don't know which government will take the territory over. If the 'States' come out on top I'm all right; my company will get the concession. If Britain wins the deal"—he grimaced—"there's a rival company who'll put us clean out of the running. If I could get to know which way the cat is going to jump I could act accordingly. Either buy more shares or sell out those I have. It's an awkward position anyway."

"I'm afraid I can't help you, Mr. Pettigrew," said Chesterton. "I've steered clear of politics so far. I only vote for two bills—the deceased wife's sister, and for the better preservation of pheasants!"

It seemed rather a strange combination, but I didn't like to make any remark. Frankie said men hated women to criticise them, and I didn't want Lord Chesterton to feel that way to me.

"It's an intensely exciting situation, Mr. Pettigrew," said Frankie. "I suppose you could clear a really big sum if you only knew what was going to happen?"

"I should that, Mrs. Norton. I'd pay handsomely for the information."

Frankie flushed and her eyes grew very bright.

"There's likely to be an exciting debate in the Commons this afternoon on this very matter," said Chesterton. "Suppose you all come down to the House and have tea on the terrace?"

Pettigrew was otherwise engaged, but Frankie at once accepted. She seemed in great spirits at the notion, just as if she had an invitation to a specially smart affair.

She put on one of her prettiest gowns, a pale green voile embroidered in silver, and a toque of cerise roses. I wore a sweet mauve muslin over a silk slip, with a ruffle of white chiffon, and a soft, crinkly straw hat trimmed with a mass of chiffon and hydrangea.

Chesterton conducted us to the Ladies' Gallery. It reminded me of a sheep pen, only we poor sheep couldn't get our heads through the *grille*. Frankie and I had good seats in the front row. I felt as if I were at the theatre and wished the orchestra would commence.

A very stout and very prosy person was speaking with much deliberation and a large number of "ahems." He was followed by an impassioned youth, with a tiresome collar that seemed to get in his way perpetually.

After he sat down everyone said "Hear, hear!" It was just like the theatre only the performers didn't take their call.

Presently Mr. Grendale got on his feet. Frankie listened to him attentively. At the close of his oration, short, sharp, and brilliant, Dollie, who had been seated further back, leant forward and welcomed Frankie with delight.

"So sweet of you, darling, to come and hear poor Horace"—Dollie always spoke of her husband as poor Horace—"didn't you think him splendid? Of course you did. Going to have tea on the terrace! How delightful! so am I."

It was a gay scene on the terrace. Society women in smart frocks, literary women

Digitized by Google

—not all smart—political women and a good sprinkling of actresses. Everyone ate strawberries and cream, including the legislators. Frankie was soon the centre of a group of Irish members; she and Dollie seemed to be the features of the afternoon.

It was a beautiful day, and the river looked bright and sparkling in the sunshine. I should have enjoyed myself thoroughly if it had not been for the thought of Toby and that terrible bill.

Dollie drove back with us to Pont Street. She was most affectionate to Frankie, and more than ever impressed with her friend's social importance.

"You must stay to dinner, dear," insisted my cousin. "Lady Gaveston is out—engaged in good works, so we can have a cosy time together."

We had a very nice meal, and then adjourned to Frankie's den. Dollie smoked cigarettes and drank champagne with a delightful sense of being wicked! "Poor Horace" had such quaint ideas about women. He couldn't bear them to smoke, she explained.

From cigarettes Frankie discussed chiffons, gliding in the most natural manner possible into Clairvette's infamous prices and her determination to be paid.

"By the bye, Dollie, if it's quite convenient, you might let me have a cheque. I'm awfully pressed, old girl, or I wouldn't bother you. I suppose you can let me have a thou. on account?"

Dollie crimsoned to the tips of her ears.

"I have spent every fraction of this quarter's allowance, dear," she said. "I shan't have another penny till next month."

"That's easily got over. Horace never refuses you anything. He'll give you a cheque for the asking."

"He can't, Frankie. He——" Dollie paused. She always tried to impress one with the idea that Horace was possessed of millions. It would, she thought, discredit her position in the smart set if she acknowledged the true state of the case.

"You don't mean to say that Mr. Grendale can't afford to pay his wife's gambling debts?" sneered Frankie. "You've no business to have played at all, if that is so."

"Horace made me promise not to gamble any more."

Frankie shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, tell him you owe the money to your dressmaker, or your tailor; I'm not particular what you say so long as I get the money. Look here, Dollie, you can't say I've been hard on you. You've owed me close on two thou. for the last month or six weeks. I've not asked you before, shouldn't now unless I was terribly pushed. You're bound to get it, old girl, and that's the fact. Would you like me to ask Mr. Grendale for you?"

"For Heaven's sake, Frankie, don't do that."

Frankie frowned, glancing at the little woman contemptuously.

"You're not behaving well, Dollie. You play with me for high stakes, then you ask me to wait for the money, although you know debts of honour should never stand over. Now when I can wait no longer you try and put me off indefinitely. It's dishonest and mean. I relied on the money to meet certain obligations. My creditors won't show me any mercy, I can tell you."

Dollie wrung her hands.

"I don't know what I shall do," she sobbed. "I daren't ask Horace for anything just now. He's so worried and harassed about affairs in Parliament. The negotiations between Britain and America have kept him awake night after night. It's very silly of him for *he's* not responsible, but there it is. I *can't* speak to him now."

Frankie gazed at her friend through a haze of smoke.

"I must say that's rather rough on you, Dollie. A woman like you oughtn't to be neglected, even for politics. The sacrifice shouldn't be all on your side."

Dollie immediately assumed an air of injury and sighed.

"I expect you could do with a little money yourself, dearie," continued Frankie. "It's a long time till next month."

"I'd give anything for some cash. I owe such a lot it makes me positively wretched."

"A clever woman like you ought to be able to make all she wants. Everyone speculates nowadays. With your sources of information you should do very well on the Stock Exchange. Why, a man I know was telling me only this morning that he could clear hundreds of thousands in the next few days if he only knew how this arbitration matter would be settled." Frankie looked swiftly at the other. "Political secrets always leak out, you know, somehow or other," she continued, "nobody knows *how*, but somebody makes a fortune. Why shouldn't you?"

"I—oh, Frankie, it would mean breaking faith with Horace! I couldn't do that. Besides"—suddenly getting frightened—"I don't know anything about the arbitration."

Frankie smiled cynically.

"Look here, Doll," she said slowly, "you'd better understand me; I mean business. You've got to pay the money you owe me. If you don't get it yourself I shall be compelled to go to your husband. By to-night—within an hour—he will know how his wife has deceived him. He will know that his wife is a gambler, and"—she lowered her voice—"a cheat."

"Not that, for God's sake, not that! It was only once, and I didn't mean to—indeed, indeed I didn't. He loves me so dearly. Trusts me so completely. I should die if he were to change towards me. I thought you were my friend, Frankie."

The unhappy little creature clutched at my cousin's hand and strove to soften her.

"It will be your own fault," said Frankie coldly, "if your husband knows. Here I point out a way by which you can clear off your debts and start afresh, and you talk sentimental rubbish about betraying your husband's trust. Don't be a fool, Dollie! How could it harm your husband? Am I likely, for my own sake, to persuade you against your interest? No one will ever find out. Come"—she bent towards her coaxingly—"I'm sure you know; tell me, which is it, Britain or America?"

"No, no," Dollie buried her head among the sofa cushions. "Don't ask me. I daren't—I *won't* tell you."

"You know the alternative. I go to Mr. Grendale."

"You can't mean it, you don't mean it!" Dollie rocked to and fro. "If I did," she glanced up tearfully. "Are you sure it wouldn't hurt Horace?"

"Positive."

"And I should get enough money to pay you and everybody else?"

"Enough to pay *me* certainly," said Frankie, "and some besides."

"But I don't know anyone on the Stock Exchange."

"I'll settle that part of the business. Come now. Speak."

But at that Dollie fell to whimpering.

Frankie lost patience.

"Be quiet," she said, "you little fool. Listen to me," seizing her by the wrist. "I'll waste no more words on you. Tell me at once, this minute, or I go to Horace. *Poor Horace!*" and she sneered.

Dorothea Grendale raised her head, a strange look in the big blue eyes. Weak she was, foolish and vain, but yet she loved her husband. The very thought that she might lose that husband's love and trust was terrible. If she did not do what Frankie wanted he would learn what she had

Digitized by Google

done. He would turn utterly from the wife he had held so dear.

And yet it was an awful thing to break his confidence. How could she, how could she do it?

I read the struggle on her face and impulsively sprang forward.

"Don't tell," I cried, "you'll never forgive yourself if you do. Confess everything to your husband; I know that he'll forgive you, but don't reveal what he said to you in confidence. For your own sake, I beg you, I pray you—don't."

Frankie showed no anger at my interference; she smiled and shrugged her shoulders.

"It's true—quite true," sobbed Dollie, "I'd better tell Horace all."

"Certainly," said my cousin. "I quite agree with you. We'll go together—Cynthia, ring for the carriage."

"I—I—Oh, it's no use," cried Dollie. "I can fight no longer. My husband told me last night about the arbitration—he was so full of it he had to speak to someone. Britain gives up her claims in favour of America. There—there—I've told you. I've betrayed Horace—betrayed my husband—what shall I do, what shall I do?" Hysterical sobs choked her, she was agitated beyond control.

Frankie promptly dashed water in her face and poured brandy down her throat. Then, tucking her up on the couch, charged me on no account to leave her for a moment.

"I am going to see Hiram," she whispered. "He'll give pretty well all I like to ask for what I've got to tell him. Keep Dollie here till I come back. At any rate, Cynthia, you might be glad of one thing. Pettigrew's money will settle Nathan's bill and save Toby from disgrace. Remember, there was only to-day to get the money. Yesterday was the first and to-morrow will be the last day of grace."

Somehow it seemed too heavy a price even for Toby's safety, as I glanced at the figure on the couch. Dollie was quieter now, but an occasional sob still shook her slight frame. She was very young, quite a girl, I thought, as I watched the pretty, fair head, drooping with shame.

Presently she sat up and commenced to talk.

"You can't think how good Horace has been to me," she said. "I've tried his patience often, I've been foolish and silly, and thought more of what other people have said than my own husband. I wish I'd never tried to be smart. If I'd been content to go out less, and stop at home more, I should be happy now, instead——" She commenced to cry again, plucking restlessly at her gown.

"Don't you make the mistake I've made, Cynthia. If you get married be content with your husband's love. Don't worry and fret about Society. It won't help you; when you're in trouble it will stamp on you, laugh at you. I wish I had done as he asked me," she wailed. "He begged me to go into the country this season. He said London would rub the bloom off my cheeks, he might have said off my heart, too. He would have run down from town very often, I should have seen just as much of him. Why did I refuse—why did I refuse?"

I sat and listened with a heavy heart. My mind went back to those first days when I had come to live with Frankie. Only the matter of six months or so, but what a lot had happened in those six months. How many things I had learnt that then were strange to me.

I knew nothing of Society then. Now—I know really too much!

The hours passed very slowly, ten, eleven, twelve had struck and Frankie had not yet returned. Dollie had made one or two efforts to go home, but I had easily dissuaded her. At last she fell into a broken sleep, murmuring every now and then her husband's name.

Just after midnight Frankie returned, looking splendid in a long sacque coat of black satin and a picture hat with heavy plumes.

She called me from the room.

"I've seen Pettigrew," she said, "and arranged everything satisfactorily. But as ill-luck would have it, coming out of his hotel—the Cecil, you know — I caught sight of Kinross. He was with two other men, and looked black as thunder when he saw me by myself. He'll make an awful fuss about it, Cynthia, and goodness knows what excuse I am to make for being out alone at such an hour. He's sure to ask for an explanation. Good Heavens!" as a thundering knock at the front door interrupted her. "I do believe that is my lord himself. What am I to do? He mustn't know that Dollie's here. You'll have to see him, Cynthia, while I get rid of her. No, that won't do. You must be present when I speak to Dollie. Quick, we must get it over soon," and she pulled me into the morning room.

"Well, Dollie," she said, smiling in her usual manner. "Are you better? That's right. I've good news for you, my dear." She leisurely unfastened her coat, studying the other intently.

"Here's my receipt for what you owe me, Doll, and a thousand pounds besides. Count the notes and see that they are all right, dear."

My cousin laid the paper and the notes on the table.

Mrs. Grendale did not speak. She rose from the couch, walked to the table, deliberately took up the notes and threw them on the floor.

"Why, Dollie——"

"I don't want your money," Dollie interrupted swiftly, "and I won't take it. As for this," she lifted the receipt, "it is of no value to me *now*, and she tore the paper into shreds.

Frankie breathed quickly, the situation was becoming strained. Outside in the hall, Kinross, his voice louder than usual, was imperatively demanding to see Mrs. Norton. At any moment he might stride into the room to look for her, and then——

"Don't be foolish, Dollie," said Frankie, biting her lips. "If you don't take the notes, what are you going to do?"

"This—I'm going straight to my husband to tell him everything." She glanced defiantly at Frankie, and moved towards the door.

In a second my cousin intercepted her, and stood triumphant, towering over her.

"You little fool," she said, "to think you can get the better of me. You will tell your husband everything, will you?" she mocked. "Idiot! He knows already, I've told him myself, everything—not half an hour ago."

And with that Frankie threw up her head and sailed out of the room.

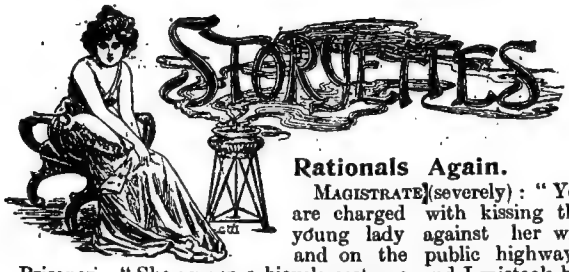
Kinross was waiting for her, angry and impatient, in the hall. I heard his voice raised to question her. She took him in the dining-room and closed the door.

He had come to ask her for an explanation of her midnight call on Pettigrew.

What explanation could she give?

(Frankie's explanation to Lord Kinross is recorded next week.)

Digitized by Google



Rationals Again.

MAGISTRATE (severely): "You are charged with kissing this young lady against her will, and on the public highway." Prisoner: "She was in a bicycle costume, and I mistook her for my long-lost brother." Magistrate (briskly): "Discharged! Call the next case."

Why it came Last.

MR. HOJACK (at dinner): "My dear, isn't it very queer for you to serve soup after the beef?" Mrs. Hojack: "Not at all, love. This is oxtail soup. It comes last."

Saved the Situation.

POLLY (to her *fiancé*): "Tom, you danced four times with that girl Jenkins, and only twice with me." Tom (slyly); "Well, it takes quantity, you know, to make up for quality."

Why it Failed.

PASSENGER in railway carriage to his neighbour: "Is marriage a failure where you live?" Colonist (returned home for a few months): "I'm sorry to say it is." "Why?" "Lack of women."

The Height of Consideration.

HE: "I think it is an outrage that the ladies should wear high hats in the theatre." She: "Yes. I must admit you men are much more considerate." "Of course we are." "Some of you who get in the front row are even so considerate as to leave your hair at home. You are too good for this world."

The Way Out.

SWEET SEVENTEEN: "Oh, papa! I have found a way for you to escape the death duties." Father: "I fancy not." Sweet Girl: "Yes, I have. You give half your stocks to Mr. Slimpurse, and then I'll marry Mr. Slimpurse, and so all the money will be kept in the family, and the Government won't get a penny."

Reassured.

TIMID LADY (about to buy a ticket for New York): "And is the boat that sails on Thursday perfectly safe?" Agent for the Ocean Greyhound Co. (gravely): "Madam, I can assure you that in all the time this ship has been in service, and that time covers a number of years, madam, not once has she gone to the bottom." Timid lady (reassured): "Oh, then, it must be all right. Let me have a cabin, please."

A Chance for Somebody.

MR. DECKER had been entertaining a party of his friends in the parlour, and the aroma of their cigars still lingered in the curtains. Mrs. Decker was naturally disgusted when she came into the room. She threw the windows wide open, and remarked: "Well, it is all very well to talk about inventing smokeless powder, but I don't see why somebody hasn't the gumption enough to invent a smokeless tobacco."

Love's Young Dream.

FATHER. "Now, see here! If you marry that young pauper, how on earth are you going to live?" Sweet Girl: I have been reading a poultry circular, and I find that a good hen will raise twenty chickens in a season. Well, the next season that will be twenty-one hens; and as each will raise twenty more chicks, that will be 420. The next year the number will be 8,400, the following year 168,000, and the next 3,360,000! Just think! At only one shilling a-piece we should have £168,000. Then, you dear old papa, we'll lend you some money so that you will be able to pay off the mortgage on this house."

Love in the Grocer's Shop.

"Do you love me?" said the paper bag to the sugar. "I'm just wrapped up in you," replied the sugar. "'You sweet thing!" murmured the paper bag.

Another Philanthropist Hardened.

PHILANTHROPIC OLD GENT: "Here, my little man, here's a penny for you." His Little Man: "Toss yer double or quits—whether yer makes it tuppence or keeps it."

Her Reasons.

MR. FLATHOUSE: "Why did you kick me under the table when I asked Gorgeleigh to have some more wild duck?" Mrs. Flathouse (severely): "For two reasons. There was no more wild duck, and not being a professional dancer I could not kick over the table."

Why He Refrained.

"MR. BLUFFLY," she said, graciously, "you are one of the most original men I have met for ever so long. You haven't said a single word about the weather." "No," he replied, with a tinge of regret in his voice, "I couldn't give my opinion of the weather in the presence of ladies."

He Wore Size 9.

MRS. DE BRIDE was entertaining callers. After they left she remarked to her husband: "I hope they didn't see my walking shoes lying there; they wouldn't think me very tidy if they did." "Oh, if they saw them, they probably thought they were mine," answered her husband, in a consoling tone. And she hasn't spoken to him since.

A Gentle Hint.

MRS. BRIGHT: "My daughter tells me that you have become quite an adept in palmistry." Young Squeezem: "Yes, I have studied it for some time. Mrs. Bright: "Well, I have had a plaster impression taken of Madeline's hand, and if you wish to study it you can do so at your leisure. It will save you the trouble of a personal examination, you know."

An Ominous Symptom.

"A GOOD wife is Heaven's greatest gift to man, and the rarest gem the earth holds," remarked Mr. Jarphly, the other morning. "She is his joy, his inspiration, and his very soul. Through her he learns to reach the pure and true, and her loving hands lead him softly over the rough places. She is——" "Jeremiah," said Mrs. Jarphly, solemnly, "Jeremiah, what wickedness have you been up to now?"

Not Quite what he Meant.

MISS CLARA WINTERBLOOM: "Mamma, this is Mr. Tutter. I want to introduce him to you. Do you know that he was under the impression that I was the only daughter, and I have just been telling him that I have two sisters." Mrs. Winterbloom: "Oh, yes. You must meet Maud and Estelle. Mr. Tutter. They are both of them older than Clara there.' Young Tutter (wishing to say the right thing): "I didn't suppose it possible, Mrs. Winterbloom, that you could have any daughters older than Miss Clara."

What is Love?

LOVE: A nervous disorder affecting the entire system, and sometimes even the clothes and food of the victim. Peculiar to both sexes of all ages, from childhood to second childhood. Always fatal in age, seldom in youth. Symptoms: Loss of appetite and interest in mundane affairs. Anxiety as to personal appearance. Longing for flowers and poetry. Sudden affection for children, especially babies that the victim has formerly despised. Demented belief in the absolute perfection of some being of the opposite sex. Vacant expression of the eyes and cerebral cavity. Patient speaks in monosyllables, and takes an especial interest in the monosyllable "Yes." Treatment: One dose of the monosyllable "No" and nursing, for males. For females, a new seal-skin jacket, diamonds, and a trip to the Riviera, are sometimes efficacious. An application of "stern parents" may be of use, but more often merely excites the malady. Marriage is an absolute specific. But it is so dangerous that it is never used except in extreme cases.

Digitized by Google

A Mission Which Failed.

And the Ambassador who Succeeded.

Mrs. Lynn felt her responsibility more than usual that morning. For four years she had been piloting her nephew, a young minister, past all kinds of matrimonial snares, only to find that when the right girl came along he was as blind and as unresponsive as though he had been made of wood.

True, he had never been even slightly conscious of the aforesaid matrimonial snares, and had not known that she was piloting him past anything. How should he—for nature, while giving him six feet of height, and power and logic and eloquence in the pulpit, had ordained that he should be as clay in the hands of the potter when it came to worldly affairs.

As for Mrs. Lynn, while he was in his study busy with next Sunday's sermon, she was expressing herself unsparingly to old Jane.

"It's really rather too bad of Dick—it's not at all what I expected of him!" she declared. "Here is Grace Noble, pretty and sensible, and with so much taste—and a sweet voice—I can't endure a screeching woman—and no relatives to speak of—I never could dream of having Dick marry a woman with an odious mother to come here and dictate to me—and she has a little money, though I'm not particular about that—I have enough for Dick——"

She paused to take a breath and to sigh a little, which gave Jane an opportunity to remark fatuously:

"Perhaps he hasn't noticed her. He's not worryin' about no woman."

"No, he hasn't noticed her," replied Mrs. Lynn with spirit. "I have her here to dinner, and go off and lie down afterwards on purpose, and he sits up there and talks books the whole time. Books! And once he came in and met her in the garden in the moonlight, and he stood there and talked flowers. No wonder she doesn't like to come over here. When he was gone that last time I pretended that he was to be away all night, and begged her to stay with me—almost lying for his sake, Jane—another little bit and it would have been a falsehood!—and he came back and wasn't in the house five minutes before he was off to see old Pennybaker, because he was ill! What is anyone to do with a man like that?"

"I wouldn't worry myself with no man," said Jane sententiously, thus virtually admitting that the problem was too much for her.

"Yes, but I can't leave him alone," said Mrs. Lynn, with a tragic emphasis. "If I do he is likely to marry just anybody—perhaps that sandy-haired Gaines girl—and think of her mother! Someone's at the door, Jane."

Mrs. Lynn was still reviewing the situation and grieving over it desperately when Jane returned.

"That young Harrison to see you, ma'am," she said with the privilege of age, and Mrs. Lynn went to meet the young Tom Harrison.

When she emerged from her conference with the much-embarrassed young man, a contemplative look was upon her face and a new look in her eyes.

"I'll see what can be done, Tom," she said cordially, and a sense of justice to Tom forced her to add, "but I don't think you need expect anything."

"I'm not hoping much," he confessed gloomily. "But I knew you were so intimate—and perhaps if she knew you thought well of me——"

"Of course," said Mrs. Lynn, busily plotting treason against Tom. "Good-bye. Tell your mother I'll send her that pickle recipe next week."

With an innocent countenance and a guileful heart Mrs. Lynn made her way into the study.

"You know how you like Tom Harrison, Dick," she said with warm and graceful interest. "Well, he's just been here—and he wants you to undertake a very delicate mission for him."

"What is it? I should be glad to help Tom," said the Rev. Richard Moore, pushing his books away.

"I knew you would," Mrs. Lynn hastened to assure him. "I told Tom you would. He's in love with a girl, you know, and he's so timid, and feels so unworthy, and so afraid of a refusal—and he thinks if you would go first and talk to the girl about it, and tell her how much everyone thinks of Tom—how much you think, especially——"

He towered before her, aghast.

"Well, I should certainly call that too delicate a mission," he cried. "Let him go himself."

"I told him you would go," said Mrs. Lynn unmoved. "He'd never go—and there'll be his happiness spoilt for his whole life. Grace thinks so much of you—it's Grace, you know—she'll listen to what you say. She went by with her sketch book a little while ago. You'll find her out in the park, I think."

He did not move.

"You mean Miss Noble?" he asked. "Don't you think she is rather superior to——"

"To Tom?" she said, with great cheerfulness. "Of course she is—but so is every woman to any man she is likely to marry. If they waited for their equals they'd all die old maids. Go along with you, Dick, and do the best you can for Tom."

When the young man found Miss Noble she had carefully established herself in a remote corner of the park, and the sketch she was painting, he saw, as he came up, should have included a bending tree with a glimpse of water under it. What was there about such a picture to make one turn it upside down with frantic haste and shut the book over it? She stood up, the colour rushing to her face, and the minister stood and looked down at her. He was all at once conscious that it would seem incongruous to speak to this girl about marrying Tom Harrison. But he had promised, and what he had promised was to be done.

"I hardly know how to go about it," was the undiplomatic way in which he opened the subject. "I shall do it very awkwardly, I know."

She did not help him out. He was embarrassed, but he went heroically on. There was but one way known to the young minister whereby things might be done, and that was the briefest and simplest and most direct way.

"I hope you won't think me officious," he said; "but I come on behalf of young Mr. Harrison. He loves you very deeply, and is so little conscious of his own merit"—he felt himself warming up—"that he hesitates to tell you of his love. I am only anxious for you to do him justice. I know him, I suppose, better than anyone else knows him. He is a thoroughly good fellow, who has built himself up through many adverse circumstances."

Miss Noble was looking at him haughtily, and her face was very white.

"Mr. Harrison is fortunate in his advocate," she said in chilling tones. "Will you tell him that I asked you not to speak further of this matter, because it would be useless—now and for ever?"

He floundered helplessly, and for one swift moment resolved never to be a friend to anybody again

Digitized by Google

"I am sorry," he said—for speech was given him that day for his own undoing. "No man's love is to be lightly thrown away—least of all the love of a man like Tom."

He waited a moment. She had turned away and was drawing on her gloves, her sketch book under her arm. Having nothing else to do, he watched the trembling gold that the sun threaded into her hair. Manifestly the proper thing to do was to go, but he could not go without looking into her face again.

"I hope you won't be angry with me," he murmured contritely. "I knew I should do it badly—I don't suppose there is any man living who could be as awkward about it as I naturally would—but you shouldn't make me feel quite so wretched as this." He walked round until he was facing her. "You surely are not going to be so unforgiving—Grace!"

She had raised her eyes, and he saw the tears in them. In an instant he was holding both her hands, and the sketch book was on the ground.

For a long moment he stood there, holding her hands and looking into her face, while his own face grew white. Then he let the hands fall.

"Good-bye," he said. "I must go and tell Tom that I can't plead his cause—for I love you myself. And then I suppose I shall make a failure of my own hopes."

He had not surprised her secret—he had only discovered his own. The young artist made a sudden grasp after her scattered pictures, the colour beginning to flame back into her face again; but he was before her; and there the topmost one had nothing to do with a bending tree and a glimpse of water under. It was a very good likeness of the Rev. Richard Moore, though even he could see that it flattered him.

"I was painting that for your aunt," said the young lady, blushing furiously. "No, I will not—at least—Richard!"

Mrs. Lynn was sitting in the half dusk of the vine-clad porch that evening when he came in and went up to her falteringly.

"I am afraid you will never forgive me, Aunt Helen," he said. "I know you were not thinking of my marrying for years yet—perhaps never—but Grace and I love one another—and I have told Tom—and I hope you won't be unwilling, auntie."

Mrs. Lynn was obliged to press both hands to her heart.

"Why, Dick Moore!" she cried, much scandalised. "I thought you went to win a wife for Tom! Well, I suppose I never shall understand any man alive! But no doubt it is all for the best. Go and bring Grace—and I'll have to forgive you, I suppose." And she stood on tiptoe to kiss the boy she had brought up.

J. T. Bishop.

The Missing Bank Note.

A Pretty Little Tale of a False Accusation.

THE respectable home of Miss Jessie Howard was in a state of turmoil. One hundred pounds had been paid to Miss Jessie that morning, and within little more than an hour the money had vanished as if by witchcraft.

Just now Miss Howard was tearfully going over all the circumstances with her niece, who stood before her with indignant eyes and protesting voice.

"Of course, Amy," sobbed Miss Jessie, "it is only natural that you should feel as you do just now, still I do wish that you would be a little more reasonable."

"Reasonable!" ejaculated the younger Miss Howard, with infinite scorn in her voice; "it is not I who am unreasonable! It is you, Aunt Jessie, when you insinuate for a single moment that Robert Armstrong had anything to do with your wretched old money."

"But just listen, Amy. I tell you I had it in my hand when he entered the room. Mr. Tenney had just been in and paid it to me. It was just as he left that Mr. Armstrong came in. I know that I held it in my right hand when he came, for, you see, I distinctly remember that I had had to put it down before I could shake hands with him. Then he told me his errand, and, of course, that put all thought of the money out of my head. I never dreamt, Amy, that you cared for him."

"Well, I do, auntie," her niece affirmed, with a sort of wrathful positivity, "and I hope you were nice to him. You haven't told me yet what you both said."

"Oh," with a deep sigh, "I suppose I was nice enough to him. You see, I didn't miss the money until after he had gone. He told me that he liked you and wanted to marry you; that he believed you cared for him. Of course I said I was astonished, and I expect he could see easily enough that that was the truth. But I had always liked his mother, and of course we know all about his family, and that's something, although it doesn't seem to matter about his family at all," she ended rather incoherently.

"Go on, auntie," commanded her niece imperiously, "what else was said?"

"Oh, well, I told him that it was not a matter in which I felt that I should interfere; that you had your own life to live, but that I was glad you had chosen a man whom I could trust and like; for I have liked him, Amy. Then, of course, he thanked me and talked about you and his plans for the future. He said that he was in rather a tight place financially just now, but that he hoped to have matters straightened out soon, and he hadn't meant to speak to you, he said, until everything was all right; but somehow he had forgotten himself."

"Yes," Amy acquiesced, with a little smile, "he certainly did forget himself if he hadn't meant to say anything to me yet, but it doesn't really make any difference, you know. What next, auntie?"

"Oh, that was all. He sat and talked about you, of course, and he thanked me, and then he left. I just went to the door here with him. He wouldn't let me go to the porch. He said that he should be here so much now that we mustn't stand on ceremony with him."

"Well!" impatiently.

"Well, then I came back and sat down to think it all over. All of a sudden I remembered that money and it wasn't on the table. I couldn't believe it at first. I just remembered

Digitized by Google

what Robert Armstrong said about being in financial trouble, and——"

In spite of her extreme vexation Amy Howard laughed outright. "My dearest aunt, Rob is worth nearly a million pounds, and your little hundred pound note wouldn't help him much."

But Miss Jessie shook her head wisely. "You can't tell me that, Amy; perhaps he needed that amount to-day."

"If he did there are a thousand places where he could get it honourably. But if there were not, and if he needed it—which he didn't in the least, I can assure you—he would lose every farthing he had rather than get it dishonourably. Now, Aunt Jessie, I am not going to get angry with you if I can help it, because you have been too good to me all my life for me to do any such thing. But you mustn't make any insinuations, auntie. Now tell me exactly what you did when you found that the money wasn't where you thought it was."

"I looked round for it at first, but you can easily see that it isn't in the room. Then I stepped to the door, and told James to call you. You see, Amy," poor Miss Jessie concluded tearfully, "I haven't been an inch outside this room since Mr. Tenney gave me that wretched money, and not a soul besides was in here until you came in just now—except Robert Armstrong."

"Then it is in this room now," said her niece, emphatically.

"Where?"

Amy looked round the small, square room that was commonly known as Miss Howard's "den," and mentally acknowledged that there were few hiding places in it. In fact, it was little used. In one corner stood a huge desk with a rolling cover, and this might have afforded a thousand possible hiding places, but Miss Jessie asserted that the desk was locked and the key in her box upstairs; that she had not been to the desk for two days. Amy tried the top and the drawers of the desk only to find that everything was locked as securely as Miss Jessie had stated. She looked beneath it and over every inch of the carpet. She shook out the folds of her aunt's dress and hunted in every corner, but all to no purpose. Aside from the desk just mentioned, the only furniture in the room consisted of a few chairs and a table on which were a couple of newspapers. Amy unfolded the papers over and over, but no money was hidden in them. At last she stopped in sheer disgust and perplexity. Her aunt had been watching her anxiously. "It isn't here, is it, Amy?"

"I certainly can't find it, Aunt Jessie," the girl acknowledged frankly, "and I have been over every bit of this room at least a dozen times. It must have blown up the chimney or out of the window."

"The chimney has been closed for weeks," her aunt said drily, "and while the window is certainly raised, there is a screen in it. The note couldn't have blown through that even if there were a bit of air stirring to-day, which there isn't."

"You are sure Mr. Tenney paid you, Aunt Jessie?" her niece asked hesitatingly.

Miss Jessie's eyes flashed ominously. "Am I a fool, Amy Howard? I have been called a good business woman for more than twenty years now, do you suppose I don't know what money is given me? Mr. Tenney had the receipt all made out, and I signed it with his fountain pen. There is the ink it left on my fingers now. I hate fountain pens! But you needn't insinuate that I am an idiot, Amy, I don't deserve it from you."

Amy took the reproof meekly, for she felt that it was not undeserved. Miss Jessie, as she herself had remarked, had now the thoroughly merited reputation of being a good business woman. If she declared that money had been paid her, then it had, and there was no more to be said on that phase of the subject. Still, Miss Jessie had undoubtedly been completely upset by Robert Armstrong's avowal, and possibly her practical wits were not so alert as usual. Yet, with this admitted, even by Miss Jessie herself, Amy was no nearer the solution of the problem than before, for Miss Howard could swear to the payment of the money, to placing it on the table after Robert Armstrong had entered, and to the fact that no one except himself had entered the room, while she had not left it.

"It is certainly worse than a Chinese puzzle," Amy declared indignantly. "Rob is coming this afternoon to take me driving, and I shall just tell him the whole story, and perhaps he can throw some light on it."

Miss Jessie fairly gasped with surprise. "What! shall you tell him that you think he must have taken the money."

"Of course not," Amy rejoined, indignantly. "That would not be the truth, so why should I say it? But I would like to know if Rob saw the money, and if he noticed anything about it. And I shall ask him."

* * * * * * *

And ask him she did that very day. It was an annoying little episode, and if possible she did not want the early days of her engagement to be troubled any more by it. She told her lover all about the mysterious disappearance of the money, and begged him to search his memory and see if he could recall anything at all about it. Of course Amy said not a word about her aunt's suspicions.

"Why, yes, dear," Armstrong said promptly. "I do remember all about it. Miss Howard laid the note on the table just as she told you she had done. After I had told her my little story, she took it up in her hand, and, after twisting it round in her fingers a few moments, she put it into her pocket. I thought that she was not half conscious of what she was doing at the time. Naturally I had upset her considerably."

Amy laughed in sheer relief. "Poor Aunt Jessie, she must have been disturbed indeed to forget what she was doing in that fashion. I presume she even forgot that she had a pocket. In fact, that is the only pocket she possesses, and she had a great fight to get that. You must know, my dear, that fashion nowadays does not allow us poor women to have pockets, and auntie's dressmaker was indignant when she insisted on having one."

Poor Miss Jessie was overwhelmed with mortification when Amy told her tale, and the missing bank note was found safely, even as Armstrong had said, in the one solitary pocket that she possessed.

"Will he ever forgive me, Amy?" she cried, plaintively.

"He doesn't know that he has anything to forgive, and we will not enlighten him, auntie," Amy said, adding maliciously: "His financial troubles have all vanished now, Aunt Jessie. He found a letter after he left you this morning, telling him that those people who have been trying to steal his South African mines have given up the fight. So, you see, Rob doesn't need your hundred pound note."

M. J.

The Modern Novel.

"TELL me honestly," said the novel reader to the novel writer, "did you ever see a woman who stood and tapped the floor impatiently with her toe for several moments, as you describe?" "Yes," was the thoughtful reply; "I did once." "Who was she?" "She was a clog dancer."

Nice for the Shopman.

MRS. UPTON: "I don't know what to do with myself this afternoon. Give me ten shillings for a ticket to the concert, and I'll go there." Hardy Upton: "Really, Clara, I have but fivepence-halfpenny in my pocket, and——" Mrs. Upton: "Oh, well, give me that, and I'll spend the afternoon shopping."

A Wonderful Gift.

FORTUNE-TELLER: "You may in time make a good income, but you will never be rich." Young man: "Eh? Why not?" "You are wasteful. You are wasteful." "My! my! I'm afraid that is true. You have a wonderful gift. How did you know I was wasteful?" "You have just wasted a shilling getting your fortune told."

Digitized by Google

A DAMAGED PICTURE.

Telling of a Girl's Devotion.

MARGARET CLAYTON put down her palette and surveyed her handiwork with satisfaction.

"That's splendid," she murmured, "the Beggar Maid's expression is perfect, I know. Dear me, what weeks of genuine hard labour that face alone represents—over and over again I've painted it. Harold will be so proud too. He knows just enough about art to appreciate my best work. I will go and bring him to see it."

Glancing round her studio she decided to move the easel to another position.

"He will see it directly the door is opened," she reflected, "and I can move it round for him to see the details."

With a happy smile upon her face she left the room and put on her hat to tell her success to the man who loved her work only less than he loved herself.

Passing a closed door on her way to the hall she hesitated. If she told her blind mother that the great work was finished, would her pleasure for her daughter's success counterbalance her grief at not being able to see the picture? After a moment's consideration she opened the drawing-room door.

"Mother, dear," she said gently, "I am going to ask Harold to come while the light is good to see the picture. It is finished."

"I am so glad, dear child. I know by your voice it is good. You are pleased. I wish I could see it, Margaret, but you must tell me exactly what it is like when you come back."

The old lady's excitement and pleasure were as manifest as her daughter's.

Margaret ran to her and putting her arms round her, kissed her.

"We will go to see it at the Academy, mother, and listen to the remarks of the crowd. It is my best work by far. I can promise you the treat safely. Two months from now. Am I conceited mother, mine?" she added laughing.

"I will look forward to it every day." Mrs. Clayton's fingers busied themselves with the knitting which was their invariable occupation, and with a delightful nod she told her daughter to hurry for Harold who must leave his books for that afternoon.

But the mother's interest was too great for her to be content to sit still when left alone.

"I will be there to hear his praises," she thought, "I know where the easel stands facing the window. Yes, I will go up and be there when they come in."

Carefully she felt for her stick and moved towards the door. She groped her way safely upstairs but it was the work of some minutes. She entered the studio and waited just inside.

Presently hearing the front door open and shut she advanced into the room.

"I must not be in the light," she reflected, "I will go to the other end. Now, he can see it quite well. Here they come."

As they opened the door there was a resounding bang, for Mrs. Clayton accidentally struck her foot against the easel, and upset the picture. Unfortunately it fell face downwards on the carpet.

"What is that?" asked the blind woman quickly, "not anything valuable I do trust? I was trying not to be in Harold's light." Then as they did not answer she became alarmed.

"Oh, Margaret, dear child, surely it is not your picture? Say I have not spoiled your work?"

Margaret glanced from the smudged canvas which she had picked up to her mother's supplicating, grief-stricken face. Stifling her cry of disappointment she said in a cheerful voice:

"All right, mother, this is not the Academy picture." Alas, it looked as if that were true.

The old lady's face radiated with joy.

"I am relieved. What a shock I had," she exclaimed. "And what do you think of Margaret's work, Harold? Is it not good and worthy of her? I came up to hear your praises."

"It is very, very good, Mrs. Clayton," was the emphatic reply, as he looked his admiration into the eyes of the woman he loved.

"And I am going to the Academy to see it," continued the blind woman fondly. "I have only two months to wait. Now I will go down and leave you. I am sure you have a lot to tell her, Harold, to say how pleased you are with her."

"The face is all smudged," cried Margaret when the door had closed behind her mother, "it is quite spoilt and the wet paint has gone over her dress and all. What shall I do? And you didn't even see it."

"You have done more than I could have done, little girl already. A V.C. isn't good enough for you, and I know you can do more. Paint the face in again and take her to the Academy to 'see' it."

"Oh, Harold, I can't. I can never touch it again."

"There, let us begin at once," and kissing her tears away he handed her the palette and brushes.

The little gods who reward the brave did not fail to do their duty in this instance. To Margaret's delight her second finished face was equally as good as the first and the smudges on the dress were soon painted over.

She was happy when she felt her mother's arm tremble with joy when she overheard the appreciative remarks of the crowd gathered round "King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," the picture of the year. But she was happier still when she read Harold's love and pride in his face.

Rita Cay.

OUR THRILLING COLOURED COVER FOR NEXT WEEK.

In her sleep she silently glided over the housetops.

An incident from the powerful story, "Through the Peril of the Night," in next Tuesday's issue.

Digitized by Google

OUR . . THRILLING SERIAL.

OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION.

By Henry Farmer.

Crump Makes a Discovery and Visits Scotland Yard.

Crump had been busy, very busy indeed, since his return from Gurlston Bay; yet not so busy but that he had been able to find time to write daily to Esther. She was rapidly improving now; though some time must elapse before it would be possible to remove her to Warham. And it was as well—so Crump told himself. John Mansfield was a changed man since the interview in which Crump, without setting before him actual proof positive of Scarsdale's innocence, had thrown light on the character of the man on whose testimony he had been convicted. He had kept nothing back, not even the deductions that he had drawn concerning the manner in which Alice Vance had met her death. The banker had been astounded, horrified beyond words. Believing the right moment to have come, Crump had not hesitated to take him into his confidence. When it came to a question of whom to trust and whom to distrust, the little man never made a mistake. He knew that the banker's secrecy could be relied upon.

Certain communications had reached the little man from abroad of a very satisfactory nature about Signor Balderini. He had also succeeded in obtaining a copy of a certificate of marriage between one James Balder and Alice Vince. He had further, after much trouble, succeeded in unearthing one of the witnesses of the marriage. Crump was capable of doing a tremendous amount of work, and doing it without flurry, and could always find the time to be amiable and courteous.

The little man was taking an early breakfast in his room at Woodbine Cottage. The day before had been spent in a remote country village, the birthplace of Alice Vince. From Railton, through Fred Wilton, he knew that Revelle and Faversham were expected at The Firs that afternoon. On the table, beside him, was laid his map of Avesham Common with its crosses and pencilled notes.

He pursed up his lips. To himself it was perfectly convincing. He was in a position now, when called upon, to produce witnesses who would be able to identify Seaton Revelle, Esq., of The Firs, as a man who, some eleven years back, had been known both as James Balder and Signor Balderini; he had proof to hand that James Balder had married Alice Vince, and that Alice Vince and Alice Vance, late parlour-maid in John Mansfield's service, had been one and the same woman. Then there was the evidence of the torn fragment of dress, fitting a tear in the dead woman's dress, and of the material of which the asylum uniform was made, discovered clinging to the gorse near to where the first bag of ballast had been found, where, also, a tuft of gorse had been uprooted; and there was the extraordinary position of the dead woman's body in the reservoir and her broken limb. Yet the little man told himself that all these points were not sufficient to secure a verdict of "Guilty!"

"Scarsdale's innocence," he muttered, "and absolute proof of it, so that the most sceptical shall not be able to entertain a tittle of doubt on the subject, is the most important, because the happiness of the living depends upon it; but it will be most grievous if this vile scoundrel should escape the penalty of this greater crime."

Then, suddenly, the little man struck his forehead sharply and gave vent to an ejaculation of annoyance.

"A most criminal piece of negligence on my part!" He shook his head more in sorrow than in anger. "I am past this kind of work, that is what is the matter with me. Now, if I had read in the papers of such a piece of neglect on someone else's part, I should have been merciless in my condemnation. Yes, sir, I am guilty. I shall not attempt to plead extenuating circumstances!"

Then he pulled out his watch.

"But I shall endeavour to atone."

He tapped his forehead with a finger as if trying to recall something.

"Ah, yes! Spender—Messrs. Spender and Sons supplied the balloon and all the accompanying tackle. Oh, but indeed, I have been guilty of a most criminal piece of negligence, and had it been anyone else I should have been so merciless."

And had anybody heard Crump mutter the words, not knowing him, he would have imagined him to be one of the most merciless of men.

"Come in!" he cried, in answer to a knock on the door.

Pollie entered, carrying the toy tea-service that Crump had given her.

"Oh, Mr. Penworthy, you haven't quite finished your breakfast, have you?"

The little man glanced surreptitiously at his watch. He had a train to catch; but there would be just time to play the game that instinct told him Pollie desired.

"Well, Pollie dear, I have to go to London this morning, on business; but there will be just time for you to make me a cup of tea!"

Then Crump, chuckling to himself, poured some real tea into the miniature tea-pot, and some real milk into the jug, and was presently gravely drinking from a cup but little larger than a thimble.

"Might I trouble you," he said, "for another cup of your most delicious tea, Lady Mary? It is a beverage for which I have a great weakness."

All of which was very delightful to Pollie.

"And now, Lady Mary, a thousand pardons; but will you excuse me? Business is unfortunately business!"

Crump caught his train; but it was by the "skin of his teeth!"

He was fortunate enough to obtain an interview with Mr. Spender himself, head of the firm, to whom he revealed himself in his true character.

"The balloon and apparatus used recently at the *fête* at Warham were supplied by you, I believe, Mr. Spender?"

"Yes."

"Has," continued Crump, "has the balloon been used since?"

"Not to my knowledge; but I'll find out for certain."

Inquiry confirmed the statement. The balloon in question was stored on the premises.

"I should like," said Crump, "to examine it, and I should be very grateful if you would consent to be present, Mr. Spender."

The wicker car had been detached from the silk envelope. Crump entered it, and proceeded to make a very careful

Digitized by Google

examination. It was in much the same state as when Revelle had left it at Ocklington. The two anchors had been placed inside. They were three-pronged, and looked like grappling irons.

Crump turned his attention to them, last of all. He had obtained from Mr. Spender a pledge of secrecy.

The ends of the prongs were shaped like fish-hooks.

"Ah!" exclaimed Crump; then, addressing Mr. Spender, "I wish to call your attention to this fragment of dark material—serge, I think—that is fixed on this hook, before I remove it. I have frequently known counsel for the defence to insinuate that the police are capable of manufacturing evidence."

Mr. Spender looked at the strip of cloth; then Crump removed it, and, having taken out his pocket case, drew therefrom another strip of cloth, that found on Avesham Common. The two strips were of the same material.

Crump had given no reasons for his examination.

"You said, 'counsel for the defence,'" said Mr. Spender, "is a law case likely to arise out of this?"

"I think so, Mr. Spender, I very much think so, a most staggering case; but until you hear from me, I can rely upon your silence!"

Some ten minutes later Crump was on his way to Scotland Yard.

"Dear me!" he sighed, as he alighted from his cab. "How time flies. It only seems yesterday——"

"Now then," said a young constable, on duty in the entrance, "what's your business?"

The little man smiled faintly. A few years ago, he would have been spoken to very differently, and to the accompaniment of a salute.

"I wish to see," answered the little man quietly, "Sir William Saunderson."

"Perhaps," said the constable sarcastically, "you'd like me to send round a message to the Home Secretary, telling him that you're here, and want to see him at once."

Sir William Saunderson was the head of the Criminal Investigation Department.

"Young man," said Crump, taking a card from his pocket, "avoid flippancy when on duty. Though the most troublesome old lady, or old man, in the world should come along and overwhelm you with trying questions, be polite, avoid sarcasm. When you feel tempted to exercise your undoubtedly brilliant wit, check yourself with the thought that, when on duty, you are the servant of the public. I won't trouble you to send for the Home Secretary at present, though very probably I shall be in communication with him before long." He paused to scribble something on his card. "Now will you kindly see that this card is delivered to Sir William?"

At that moment a gentleman, who had driven up in a closed carriage, passed into the entrance hall.

The constable went stiff and saluted. Then, the next moment, to his intense surprise, Sir William Saunderson was heartily shaking the insignificant, homely little man by the hand.

"Why, Crump, this is a most delightful surprise."

"Crump—*the* Crump!" thought the constable. "Oh, my Lord! But I've put my foot in it nicely, this time."

But when Crump, Sir William's arm linked in his, passed the constable, he nodded to him in a friendly way and with a quizzing glance in his small eyes that seemed to say: "Don't be downcast, young man, we all of us make mistakes sometimes."

For over an hour Crump was closeted with the great man.

"And that," said Crump, at the conclusion of his narrative, "is how matters stand at the present moment, Sir William, I have behaved, I know, in an unorthodox fashion. I ought, perhaps, to have communicated with you long before this; but, rightly or wrongly, my object has been, and is, not so much the unmasking of the scoundrel who is now posing as a gentleman at Warham, as the righting of an innocent man, though, at the same time, before I have done with him, I hope to have the supreme satisfaction of seeing that infamous blackguard adequately punished."

"Crump," said Sir William, "there is no need for you to make excuses. You will continue to conduct this case in your own way, and the services of Scotland Yard are at your disposal."

"Thank you very much indeed, Sir William," said the little man gratefully. "I shall not hesitate to take advantage of your kind offer!"

"I shall give instructions that all orders received here from you, Crump, are to be obeyed as implicitly as though you were still chief inspector, and, I assure you, I have often regretted your retirement."

"It is most kind of you to say that," answered Crump, with considerable embarrassment.

"Mind you, Crump, with regard to the murder—and I am as much convinced as yourself that it was murder—I don't think that even now there's enough evidence to insure conviction."

"Quite so. I have the same doubts—at present; but I do not despair of ultimate success. And I certainly feel that to-day a step forward has been taken. And now, Sir William, I must take my leave. Mr. Revelle and Mr. Faversham are expected back at Warham this afternoon."

"Well, good-bye, Crump. I wish you every success!"

There was a little twinkle in Crump's eyes as he passed the constable in the entrance hall. The man hung his head rather sheepishly.

"I'm very sorry for my mistake, Mr. Crump, I'm sure!"

Crump patted him on the shoulder.

"I quite enjoyed it," he said, with a little chuckle, "don't distress yourself any more about it. Good morning!"

But, once outside, the amused smile died away, and the little man's face assumed a grave look.

"If," he muttered, "my conclusions should turn out to be wrong! I—I am feeling as nervous as a kitten! Yet they are pressing Revelle horribly for money. Unless he settles with his creditors soon, his position will be untenable. From the trouble that Tomlinson has been to in order to pump Fred and Tom on the movements of the police in the Warham neighbourhood, from his frequent visits to the Towers, I can't help thinking that his master means the Normanhurst jewels to supply him with the capital so desperately needed. Or if I am wrong in that respect, at all events he is meditating a *coup* somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood, and if he means to keep his head above water he must bring it off soon. I feel that the crisis on which everything turns may be now daily—or rather nightly—expected. I have practically promised that dear young lady that all will be well ultimately, and it's this that is making me feel so unpleasantly nervous. I am glad that Sir William approved of my policy of allowing the scoundrel sufficient rope in the belief that he will hang himself. It is good of him to allow me a free hand."

On his arrival at Warham, he returned to Woodbine Cottage, where he locked away the shred of cloth taken from the prong of the anchor. Not long after he received a telegram. It was from Grogan, his one-time colleague at Scotland Yard, who was keeping Benny Beard under surveillance.

"That's all right!" muttered the little man.

The telegram had been dispatched from a London terminus, and stated that B. had booked for Warham.

"And now," said the little man, as he leant back in the arm-chair, and covered his face with his handkerchief, "I may as well snatch a little sleep, seeing that I shall have no opportunity during the greater portion of the night."

A few moments later he was sleeping peacefully. When he awakened, Tom Jackson was entering the room. He was in mufti.

"Well, Tom, my lad?"

Digitized by Google

"I've just seen Railton. Faversham's come, and gone!"

"Gone?"

"Yes"

"Dear me!"—Crump cogitated for a moment—"I wonder if there has been a split, or a change of plans? Tom, you will be doing me a great favour by taking a telegram for me?"

"Certainly."

"Did—Railton," said Crump, pencilling a message at the same time, "give you no particulars?"

"No. Only that Mr. Faversham had returned again to London."

"It isn't laziness, Tom, on my part, asking you to dispatch this message, but the fact the address is that of a private detective agency. You will be delighted to hear that the latest news from Gurlston Bay is that Miss Mansfield continues to progress most favourably."

The telegram was to Grogan, informing him of Benny's return to London, and asking him to get in touch with him again at once.

That evening Crump went out, taking his latch-key with him, after telling Mrs. Cobb not to sit up for him. He only returned to the cottage shortly before dawn. The night had been spent in watching The Firs; but without result.

A telegram reached him as he was sitting at breakfast.

"F. returned to his old quarters."

Had there been a quarrel? Or did it imply a change of plans?

"At all events," reflected Crump, "I can rely absolutely on Grogan. And that reminds me. I must send him a cheque on account of expenses. He's a good fellow, and wouldn't think of asking for such a thing; but business is business, and his time is money!"

And in the letter that accompanied the cheque, Crump conveyed the idea that he was acting on behalf of a third person. It was characteristic of him. Then he yawned; but he mastered his sleepiness, and proceeded to pen a long letter to Esther.

"I am so pleased to think," he said to himself, "that the misunderstanding between father and daughter no longer exists. She will not be nearly so lonely now!"

His letter to Esther finished, he penned another to her father. His correspondence posted, he paid a visit to The Woodlands, where he spent some time with Banks, the gardener, and expressed his satisfaction at the way in which the alterations were progressing.

"Another week, Mr. Penworthy, will see the job done, I'm thinking. I'm sure it's been a pleasure to work with you."

"It's very kind of you to say that, Banks."

"But since we started on it, Mr. Penworthy, a lot o' sad things have happened, haven't they? Poor Vance gone, and now all these terrible things have been taking place at Gurlston Bay. Heart-breaking for Miss Esther! I'm sure it cast a regular sadness over everybody round about here. You know, we all worship her. And it's curious, too, how opinions change. At the time of the robbery, there was scarcely a soul that had a good word for Alec Scarsdale, now there's a change in his favour. You see, he's showed himself such a plucky one."

The two men were standing with their backs to the gate.

"Good morning to you, Mr. Banks," said a voice from behind them, "busy as usual!"

And Railton, otherwise Tomlinson, Revelle's silent valet, leant over the gate.

Banks had turned round sharply. Crump—his acute faculties had served him well—had recognised the voice, though, with the exception of that one occasion outside The Firs when Tomlinson had all but collided with him in the dark, he had not heard it for years. It was a crucial moment. He had altered his appearance; but Tomlinson was remarkably cunning, and not likely to forget the man who had been the means of sending him to seven years' penal servitude. And Crump realised that recognition would spell disaster to his hopes. But the little man showed no outward symptoms of flurry. His back still turned, he scratched his head thought-

A Wise Schoolboy.

Ten-year-old George Chambers, the son of a well-known Dublin veterinary surgeon, asked at school to construct a sentence in which the word "cure" appeared, promptly wrote "Bile Beans cure Biliousness." As proof of the wide recognition of this important fact, it may be stated that the master accepted the sentence as a perfectly matter-of-fact one, just as if the boy had written, "Nature's remedies are the safest cure for Nature's ills." Bile Beans are purely vegetable, and in all cases of biliousness and liver disorder are unequalled. All chemists stock them at one and three-halfpence or two and nine per box. Mrs. E. Simmonds, of Parfett Street, Commercial Road, London, E., says: "After the birth of my first child I frequently suffered from bilious attacks, together with constipation and piles.

"Sometimes my food, however carefully selected, would return, and for days at a stretch I was so bilious as to be practically useless in the house. Until I tried Bile Beans nothing seemed to touch my complaint. In Bile Beans, however, I found a remedy; and after fourteen long years of ill-health they have quite restored me. As a mark of gratitude I shall always recommend them." Here is powerful corroboration of the truth contained in the school-sentence. If you suffer note it well.

SULPHOLINE LOTION.

For clearing the Skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

YOUR SAVINGS

MORE THAN DOUBLED.

YOUR SATISFACTION COMPLETE.

Write at once for

H. SAMUEL'S

GREAT FREE

BARGAIN GUIDE

FREE FOR A POST-CARD.

260 Pages, 3,000 Engravings of Diamonds, Watches, Clocks, Chains, Cutlery, Plate, &c.

THE "ACME."

Solid Silver Case, fine ¾-plate movement, jewelled, dust and damp proof cap, and the latest patented improvements.

H. SAMUEL'S PRICE 25/-.

Warranted for Seven Years.

SENT YOU FOR 5/-.

Test it for a week. If satisfied, remit balance, 20/-. Those sending full amount with order receive a

FREE SILVER ALBERT

SEND YOUR POST-CARD NOW.

H. SAMUEL (Dept. 29) Market Street, **MANCHESTER.**

OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION.

Our Powerful Serial.

fully; then walked up to the labourer who was digging some little distance away, and entered into conversation with him.

"Who's that?" questioned Railton.

"Why, Mr. Penworthy. Haven't you seen him before?"

"No."

"A rare nice sort. And how are things going at The Firs?"

Railton was staring rather fixedly at the little man's back view.

"I am sorry to say," he answered, his eyes still riveted on Crump, "I am sorry to say that Mr. Revelle is far from well this morning. He has not felt up to leaving his bed. The doctor has been in to see him, and seems to fear that he is suffering from influenza."

Crump, having finished his conversation with the labourer, tilted his soft felt hat to the back of his head and clasped his hands behind his back, then strolled away thoughtfully and disappeared into a shrubbery. Railton followed him with his eyes. His usually expressionless features wore a puzzled, rather uneasy look. Somehow the figure seemed familiar to him.

"Mr. Penworthy," he muttered half to himself, "he's the horticultural specialist that I've heard my master mention. Of course, he's lodging at Woodbine Cottage. Of course. Well, I must be getting along. I don't suppose my master will be leaving his bed for the next day or two. Good morning, Mr. Banks."

Some few moments after Railton's departure, Crump, seemingly wrapped in thought, emerged from the shrubbery.

"So you don't know Railton?" said Banks.

"Oh," said Crump, "was that Railton, Mr. Revelle's valet? And how are matters at The Firs. I had hoped that Mr. Revelle was going to intrust me with the laying out of the grounds there; but it doesn't look like it now."

"Railton tells me that Mr. Revelle's laid up in bed, supposed to be the influenza. He's not expected to be out for a day or two. Queer thing, that influenza—you never know how it's going to take a man!"

Crump's eyes were twinkling brightly.

"You are quite right, Banks. It is a curious complaint!"

Was it influenza, the little man was wondering, or a false report that Revelle, for purposes of his own, wished to be disseminated?

"My habit," he said to himself, when later he was returning to Woodbine Cottage, "of jumping at conclusions is past cure. I can't help myself. Is this report being put about, with the view of being able to establish an *alibi*, should such a thing be required?"

He gave a little laugh.

"Dear me! What a terribly suspicious person I am! At the same time, I think I shall take advantage of Sir William's kind offer. Tom and Fred would have answered admirably; but they are hampered by their duties."

Once within the cottage, he referred to a very worn pocket-book that he carried, and presently worked out a cypher message on a sheet of paper. When, later, Fred looked in, the little man requested him to dispatch a telegram for him.

Shortly after dusk, two ordinarily dressed, quiet-looking men called at Woodbine Cottage and asked for Mr. Penworthy.

"Two old friends of mine," Crump explained presently to Mrs. Cobb, whom he found alone in the kitchen, "they are homely fellows, and wouldn't mind sharing the same bed. Do you think you could put them up for to-night, Mrs. Cobb, without unduly inconveniencing yourself? I am quite sure they would be very happy and comfortable in that little room upstairs. Could you manage it? I should be exceedingly obliged to you!"

Had it been anyone else, Mrs. Cobb would have probably refused there and then; but, seeing that it was Mr. Penworthy, it was altogether another matter. Crump, like Father O'Flynn, had such a wonderful way with him.

"Seeing that it's to oblige you, Mr. Penworthy, and if you think that they'll be comfortable, why certainly!"

"That is very nice and kind of you, Mrs. Cobb!"

"It's a pleasure to do things for him," reflected the old lady, after Crump had joined his friends.

"That is settled," exclaimed Crump, as he closed the door of his room behind him, "and now, gentlemen, I will explain more fully the plan of campaign."

BENNY WRITES A NUMBER OF LETTERS AND DESTROYS THEM.

HAUNTED by his conscience, as well as feeling that, for all his seeming friendliness and unconcern, the Marquis had "got his knife into him," Benny Beard had returned to London in a restless, unenviable frame of mind.

"He'll be trying to get even with me, sooner or later," he told himself, "for having given him the chuck. I know the Marquis. I wish to Heaven now that he'd never crossed my path. I've been a weak fool. And there's that poor wretch gone back to prison, and they'll make it doubly hot for him, after this escape of his and his other goings-on. It'll break him, body and soul. Five years nearly did for me. And there's that poor girl, eating out her heart, and ill. Her face, those dark eyes of hers, are everlastingly haunting me! And when I came that cropper, she behaved to me like an angel, and yet I'm positive that she suspected me; I'm positive that she's seen through the Marquis from the first. It was always there in her eyes, that mute look of reproach. And for all his devil-may-care manner, I believe the Marquis realises now that, as far as she is concerned, the game's up. He won't give in; but he's desperate. They're howling for money. If he could have given proof that he was really engaged to her, Masters would have advanced him the money right enough. But now he refuses to let him have a penny. It is a case of the Normanhurst jewels, or smashing up. He'll pull it off right enough. He's a genius at that sort of game; and that poor wretch will continue to stick in prison, and that poor girl will go on eating out her heart, unless——"

Benny was making his way on foot to his rooms—he had recently changed his quarters. He glanced nervously at the passers-by, as though afraid that they might have read his thoughts.

"And I can't help thinking that, sooner or later, he'll be trying to get even with me, unless I—I get one in first!"

He paused to buy an evening paper. A man sauntering along, some little distance behind him, paused also, to light a cigarette. Benny shivered as he went on his way again.

"He's as much in my power as I am in his. There'd be only one way of shutting my mouth. 'The man who sells me, will be signing his death-warrant at the same time!' that's what he said."

It was only when he had reached his rooms, situated in a quiet street in the north of London, that he glanced at his paper.

He winced as if he had been suddenly pricked with a knife. A short paragraph, tucked away in a corner, told him that convict 35 had been sentenced to a long spell of solitary confinement and punishment diet, and that the remainder of his sentence would have to be served in full!

"God help him!" he whispered hoarsely.

A moment later, he was pacing the room feverishly, remorse gnawing at his heart strings. Suddenly he sharply covered his eyes with his hands.

"I can see the look that will come into her eyes when she reads this! Why, in Heaven's name, am I cursed with a conscience?"

The room that he was in was on the ground floor. The house stood a little way back from the pavement, a dingy little patch of garden in front. As he sprang to the window, and pulled down the blinds, a man sauntered past; but Benny

Digitized by Google

Call or Write.

"Alfosco" Reg.

Allen Foster & Co

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

47 GOLDEN LANE, LONDON, E.C.

Call or Write.

"Alfosco" Reg.

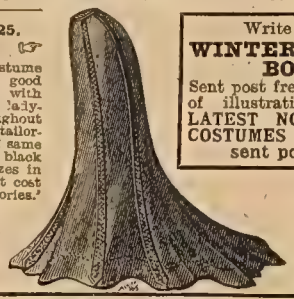
BUY DIRECT BY PARCEL POST FROM THE LEADING FIRM OF LONDON MANUFACTURERS.

Design No. 1262. **10/6**

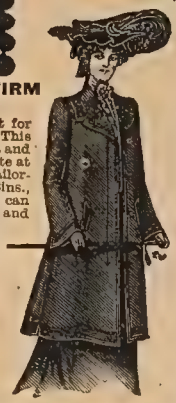
Design No. 1262. 10/6. The fashionable three-quarter Sacque Jacket for Autumn and Winter wear, direct at first cost from the "Alfosco Factories." This marvellous jacket is produced in several excellent cloths—Black or Grey Vicuna and Frieze, also in pretty Grey Tweeds, and in Black, Fawn, and Brown Beaver—write at once for patterns. The jacket is cut with the full sacque back and trimmed with tailor-stitching, and pearl buttons, smart cuffs and lappels. Price, 30ins. long, **10/6**; 33ins., **11/6**; 36ins., **12/6**; 39ins., **13/6**; or 42ins., **14/6**; carriage 6d. extra. This jacket can be ordered single breasted if preferred. Send bust measurement, under arms, and length required. Money returned if not approved.

Design No. 1425. 10/6.

The latest in Costume Skirts. Made in a good black Vicuna Cloth with bright finish. This lady-like skirt is lined throughout and trimmed with tailor-stitched strappings of same material and small black silk buttons. All sizes in stock. Direct at first cost from the 'Alfosco Factories.' Price only **10/6**, carriage 6d. extra. In ordering send waist measurement and length of skirt in front.



Write for our **WINTER SKETCH BOOK.** Sent post free. Hundreds of illustrations of the LATEST NOVELTIES of COSTUMES & JACKETS sent post free.



Design No. 1261. **10/6** Carriage 6d. extra.

Design No. 1261. 10/6.

Chesterfield Three-quarter Sacque Jacket for Autumn and Winter. This Jacket is produced in Black, Fawn, and Brown Beaver Cloth, also in pretty Gr y Tweeds. Price only **10/6**, carriage 6d. extra. This jacket can also be ordered 33ins. long, **11/6**; 36ins., **12/6**; 39ins., **13/6**; and 40ins., **14/6**; carriage 6d extra.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,

47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Cures in Ten Minutes

Never Fails!

Nothing Like It" or "As Good"

KAPUTINE

The Safe Remedy for

HEADACHE & NEURALGIA

Supplied for use in the Field Hospitals of H.I.M. THE KING OF GREECE, the Red Cross Society in the South African War, the Anglo-Chinese Hospitals, &c., &c.

Recommended by many medical men, including Dr. Alexander, M.D., Dr. Thompson, M.D., Dr. Boyd Williams, M.D., &c., &c.

There is no similar preparation, nor anything as good.

All leading Chemists sell it at **1/-**, packet of **18** doses, or for **12** stamps, from

KAPUTINE LTD., Huddersfield.

"TATCHO"

Gets the hair back, Puts the hair right, Keeps the hair right.

WHO SAY SO.

LADY SYKES—

"I can recommend 'Tatcho.' It has entirely renovated my hair.—Mayfair, W."

PRINCESS EUGENIE CRISTOFOROS PALŒLOGUE—

"'Tatcho' is invaluable. I would not be without it on any account.—Belvedere Hotel, Kensington."

Commander T. WOLFE MURRAY, R.N.—

"I have found 'Tatcho' of distinct benefit to my hair.—Trowbridge, Crediton, June 18th, 1902."

Major-General KEATE—

"I find the renewer excellent, and better than anything I have ever tried in the course of a long life. I could not have believed that any preparation could do so much good in so short a time.—High Croft, Winchester."

Colonel PERRY—

"My Dear Mr. Sims,—'Tatcho' is wonderful, and all to whom I recommend it praise it. I hope others have advised the use of 'Tatcho' as I have.—Royal Hibernian Hotel, Dawson Street, Dublin."

Colonel BAGOT-CHESTER—

"I well know how valuable 'Tatcho' is.—Zetland House, Maidenhead."

Mrs. BROWN POTTER—

"I use only 'Tatcho.'"

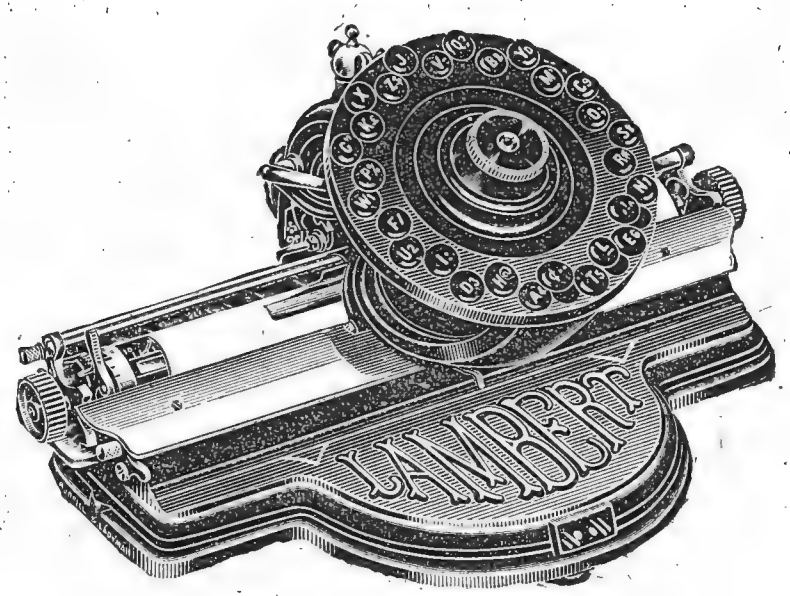
Mrs. BROWN POTTER.

A 4/6 full size bottle for 1/10

is supplied to enable the public to test the possibilities of "Tatcho." Chemists, Stores, and Hairdressers, or direct, carriage paid, from the "Tatcho" Depot, Lincoln's Inn, London.

"TATCHO" is sold by all Chemist and Stores throughout the world, in bottles at 1/-, 2/9 and 5/-

HOW GIRLS CAN MAKE MONEY!



On this page we give an illustration of the latest invention in typewriters. It is called the **LAMBERT.** It is a dainty little machine, but built for practical use in the office and the home. The Lambert does the work of any standard typewriter and does it equally well. The Lambert costs only **£7 10s.** and weighs only 5lb., so by saving up or getting your friends to advance this amount (which, if you are enterprising, you will be able to pay back in a month or so) you can possess a typewriter. The **LAMBERT** fits in a pretty little case and can be carried about comfortably. Remember, once you possess a typewriter you can earn money. A girl who can earn money always commands admiration and respect.

Write to us for our Illustrated Book about the Lambert Typewriter. It is essentially the machine for Ladies.

We will also tell you where you can see a machine.

WE HAVE AGENTS EVERYWHERE.

The LAMBERT typewriter is made by

THE GRAMOPHONE & TYPEWRITER LTD.,

21 CITY ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

Digitized by Google

scarcely noticed him. He lighted the lamp; then, after more feverish pacings, fetched writing materials.

For a long time he sat, biting his penholder; then he wrote a few sentences, immediately afterwards tearing the paper up into tiny fragments. Then he drew out a bank-book, and studied the state of his account.

"I should be well across the water before the letter was delivered. There's still a tidy sum to my credit at the bank, and——"

He pulled out his watch. It was not going. A glance at the blinded window, then he opened the back of the watch. The works had been removed. In the cavity, in cotton-wool, lay three stones—unset diamonds!

Had Crump but suspected the existence of these, Mr. Faversham's pocket—for all the stout strap that was attached to the watch—would have been picked, months previously! Of the loot taken from John Mansfield's safe all had been disposed of but these three stones. They represented a portion of Benny's share of the plunder, and constituted a reserve fund upon which to fall back in case of accidents. In the event of an embargo being placed upon his banking account, and himself perhaps compelled to fly the country, Benny would have still had the equivalent of three or four hundred pounds about him.

"With what's in the bank, and what these would fetch," muttered the dapper little cracksman, "I could keep things going abroad for some time comfortably. And once across the water—no, I don't think they'd be likely to find Benny, I don't really!"

He snapped to the coverings of the watch case.

"Masters would let me have three-fifty down on the nail for these!"

He was pacing the room again restlessly; then he commenced another letter, only to tear it up into tiny fragments.

"Too late to catch Masters at his office to-night; but I'll get round there some time to-morrow, and I'll also have what's left out of the bank, then——"

A third attempt to write a letter ended as the others had done—in tiny fragments.

"I'm not pleasant company for myself, somehow. I'll try a music-hall!" he whispered desperately.

The following morning, shortly after ten o'clock, saw him in a cab, bound for Chancery Lane. Some distance behind, another cab followed.

Alighting outside a big block of buildings let out in chambers, Benny passed up on to the third floor, and rang the bell outside a door on which was painted "Lewis Masters, Turf Accountant & Commission Agent."

He was still awaiting the opening of the door, when a man reached the landing, and continued on his way up the next flight of stairs. A pale-faced office-boy opened the door.

"Mr. Masters?"

"Not in, sir. Out of town, and won't be back till to-morrow."

"What time?"

"Couldn't exactly say, sir; but I don't think it will be before the afternoon or early evening."

After a visit to his bankers, Benny returned to his rooms, and spent the rest of the morning writing letters—and tearing them up.

The man's whole bearing told of mental restlessness and indecision.

"The Marquis is going to pull that job off to-night!" he muttered to himself, more than once, "I wish to Heaven he'd never crossed my path, or that poor girl's! And if I don't get the best of him, he'll be getting the best of me!"

He wrote another letter only to tear it up.

"The man who sells me will be signing his own death-warrant at the same time!"

These words, continually ringing in Benny's ears, were perhaps responsible for such waste of ink and paper.

(Next week more links are added to the chain of evidence which is to convict Revelle.)

New Methods in the Treatment of Deafness.

In a recent medical publication we find a description of a new way of treating deafness which is rapidly taking the place of the old methods. In fact, the records of the Institute where this new treatment is used, show many remarkable instances in which the hearing has been restored after the patient has been pronounced incurably deaf. Those who are interested in this subject are referred to "The Journal for the Deaf" for July, in which there is a full description of the new treatment. A free copy of the Journal, containing a description of this method, can be obtained by addressing the Editor, 72 Regent's Park Road, London, N.W. With the "Journal" is enclosed a "Supplement," containing details of upwards of forty cases cured during the past month, and also a Patient's Report Form, which enables anyone to receive free advice as to the application of the treatment at home.

LADY'S MAGAZINE

For SEPTEMBER

JUST OUT.

SOME OF THE CONTENTS:

Conjuring for Ladies.	Pearls of the Marquise.
Society Tittle Tattle.	Servants.
Editha.	Law for the Lady.
Mothers and Children.	Girls' Interests and Hobbies.
Cookery.	Etiquette.
Three Loves.	Serial.
Home and Table Decorations.	Woman on a Journey.
Health and Beauty.	The Man at Home.
Dress and Fashion.	House Beautiful.
Behind the Scenes.	Toilet.

Notes on Novelties.

AND

A PAPER PATTERN OF A FLANNEL BLOUSE.

A COMPLETE MAGAZINE FOR CHILDREN.

A SET OF REAL PAINTS.

Forty Prizes, including 10 Gramophones, worth about £3 each, are offered as Prizes in a Competition.

ALL THIS FOR SIXPENCE.

Digitized by Google

By Madge Morris.

[I shall be glad to answer, to the best of my ability, any letters from readers dealing with affairs of the heart, tangles in domestic life, or points of etiquette. All communications must be addressed to me personally, c/o the Editor of Short Stories.*]*

An Out-of-Date Fad.

"Elsie H." hates smoking, and before her marriage her husband made a point of not indulging himself in a weed while with her. Now they have been married some time, he invariably lights his pipe in the evening, much to his wife's annoyance. She thinks the way men smoke in the house is very ill-mannered, and adds: "How would they like it if women were to spend their whole evenings eating chocolate, which is supposed to fill the same function as does smoking to men."

* * * * *

I think "Elsie" is a little hard on her husband. Very few women nowadays have this objection to tobacco, under proper circumstances. So far from its being selfish on their parts, men usually get far more amiable and talkative when smoking than when not doing so. "Elsie" should be rather glad to think that her husband is content to sit at home and smoke than to wish to go out to a club or elsewhere and indulge his fancy. Rest assured that if tobacco were prohibited at home, her husband would before long develop a distinct desire to go out, which would be far less pleasant for "Elsie" than those few fumes at home. She should learn to get accustomed to smoke, which has become more and more a necessity of man's strange organisation than it used to be.

❦❦❦

Looking After the Pence.

"S. D." has my deep sympathy. He is a sensible young man who does not let the imaginary duties of love blind him to the need for increasing his income. The circumstances are these: He has the opportunity of taking up evening employment which will considerably add to his income. But this means that he will only be able to see his sweetheart on Sundays. This causes her no little regret, but "S. D." by taking on this employment will be able to make enough money to start a home, which will make the future look brighter for both of them.

* * * *

Yes, "S. D.," you should talk very seriously to her about the matter. The secret of your happiness in married life must so greatly depend on your position that she should certainly see that it is her duty to sacrifice those week-day evening meetings, however sweet they may be.

❦❦❦

Friendship or Worse?

"Perplexed" is engaged to a girl, but is only able to see her once a fortnight. The engagement is as yet a secret. During the intervals between their meetings, the girl has been seeing a good deal of a man very much her senior. She asked "Perplexed's" permission to see this man, which the latter generously gave. Since this, however, they have begun to see each other every day and go for walks together. Should "Perplexed" ask her to discontinue this, or do I think he might allow it to go on, trusting in his sweetheart's fidelity? The man is forty-one, the girl twenty-one, and the feeling between them may be merely friendship.

* * * * * *

I am a great believer in friendship, but quite realise that in some cases it is a dangerous toy. Whether "Perplexed" allows this intimacy to proceed between his sweetheart and this man must depend on, firstly, her own character, and secondly on his. If the girl is, let us say, thoughtful and cultivated, and enjoys friendship for its own sake, and the man is a gentleman, and not likely to act dishonourably, I think "Perplexed" need have no fears. But he should most certainly make his engagement known as soon as possible, as unless he does so, complications may arise which will be very difficult to get out of.

❦❦❦

Unacquainted and in Love.

"A. W." goes by the same road to business as a young lady. When they pass they have been in the habit of exchanging familiar, and even wistful glances. Would it be conformable with propriety for him to openly acknowledge her? "A. W." is attracted towards her.

* * * *

Those "wistful" (expressive word) glances suggest that she would not dislike to know "A. W." I should not advise him to be too sudden in making her acquaintance. Supposing his glances grow less wistful as time goes on, and that something like a smile begins to discreetly dawn on his countenance? The smile might be gracefully modulated into an acknowledgment, and when that stage is reached, "A. W." should simply talk to the girl without further ado. But it is always well to know definitely that one is not looked upon unfavourably before acting in this forward manner.

❦❦❦

A Very Silly Quarrel.

"Fred" was rather late in meeting his sweetheart "Gertrude" the other day. She appeared to be annoyed at his delay, and "Fred" resented this, saying that it was time to "look out for a fresh girl." "Gertrude" at once gave up going with him, and started acquaintance with a friend of his. Now "Fred" wants to get back into her good graces without upsetting his friend. How should he proceed?

* * * *

"Fred" showed that he looked upon the girl as a mere convenience when he said he would have to look out for someone else. It was a clear suggestion that he had no real affection for her. It is not surprising that she sought the friendship of another. I do not know how "Fred" can win her away from his friend without a quarrel. He was foolish to be so careless of retaining her affection in the first instance. All he can do is to see how the affair with the friend progresses, and await his chance to reinstate himself in her good books.

❦❦❦

An Engagement to be Broken.

"Charlotte" has been meeting "Walter" for six months. At first she thought she was fond of him, but now she sees that there are points in his character which would mean an unhappy marriage. At the same time he is very fond indeed of her, and she fears it would break his heart to tell him that she no longer thinks of him as a future husband. Is a girl justified in giving so much pain to a man?

* * * *

Certainly, "Charlotte," if you really feel that a life with him would be an unhappy one. You are compelled by duty to break off the engagement if you no longer love him. Your duty, however, is to lighten the load of parting so far as you possibly can. It would be better if you were to take a holiday for a time, and, if possible, spend a month away from home. Your letters should be less frequent than is usual, and perhaps couched in a cooler strain. Then you might break the news to him of the cessation of the engagement. In this way the shock would not be so sudden, and, having anticipated its approach, the man would be more likely to take it coolly than if it were broken to him without notice.

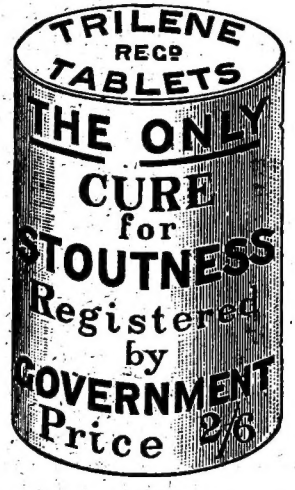
Printed by Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

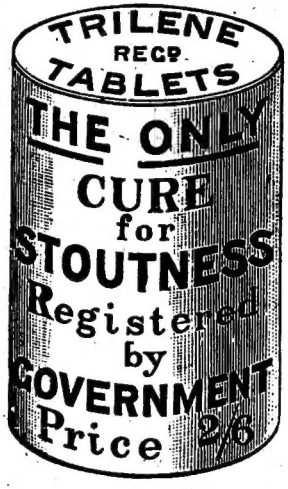
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION**, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"87 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1899.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely.

"Yours faithfully, J. E. CANHAM."

COUNTESS SECKENDORF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

MISS CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 8lb., but am now 11st., and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

MRS. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

Miss NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Riseholm Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

"West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

Mr. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets, which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

MRS. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

Mr. MCLEOD, 44 Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

COUNT EHRENWAUD, of Liatorp, Sweden, writes, 9th Oct., 1899: "The person who took Tablets lost 18lb. during the cure.

Mr. GIBBS, 147 Richmond Park, Kimberworth, Rotherham, says: "Since I began with them they have reduced me 2st. 3lb., and I am pleased to say I am a great deal better in health and in every way."

Mrs. FENTON, 11 Wood Street, Tyldesley, writes: "Been fat all my life, but now your Tablets tell a tale. I have lost 17lb. already and am delighted."

Mrs. MARY WILLIAMS, of Old Yard, near Redol, Bagillt, Wales, writes, Nov. 22nd, 1898: "Your Tablets reduced me 2st., and have benefited me greatly."

A. M. PRATT, of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

Mrs. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

Mrs. PEARCE, Armstrong Road, Benwell: "Reduced from 12st. to 9½st., and do not get any heavier."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs., says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

Mrs. ROLLITT, of North Farm, Letwell, says: "Tablets have done a world of good—reduced 14lb. already without altering diet."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes: "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

Mrs. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver, nr. Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Miss JANE CARTER, of Forthampton House, Tewkesbury, says: "The Tablets are of the greatest value. I am reduced many stone, and shall be pleased to recommend them."

Mr. THOS BLAKELY, of 37 The Grove, Bedford, writes: "I have lost a little over 42lb. since taking your Tablets, and my case causes much local interest."

Miss F. L. BALL 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Theydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2st., and am sufficiently reduced."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

A SINGLE BOX OF BEECHAM'S PILLS

CAN cure and chase away more ills than you're aware of.

To remember to keep a box by you, and
To remember to take a dose of the pills
at the proper time, is the

ABC OF HEALTH.

They ensure

A CLEAR HEAD, A HEALTHY LIVER,
PURE BLOOD, A SOUND STOMACH.

and, therefore, as a natural consequence

THEY PREVENT AND CURE

NERVOUSNESS	SICK HEADACHE	BACKACHE
INDIGESTION	ANÆMIA	GRAVEL
BILIOUSNESS	FLATULENCY	SKIN ERUPTIONS
CONSTIPATION	DEPRESSION	INSOMNIA

The GREATEST TREASURE in the BEDROOM is a Box of

BEECHAM'S PILLS

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London W.C.

Digitized by Google